

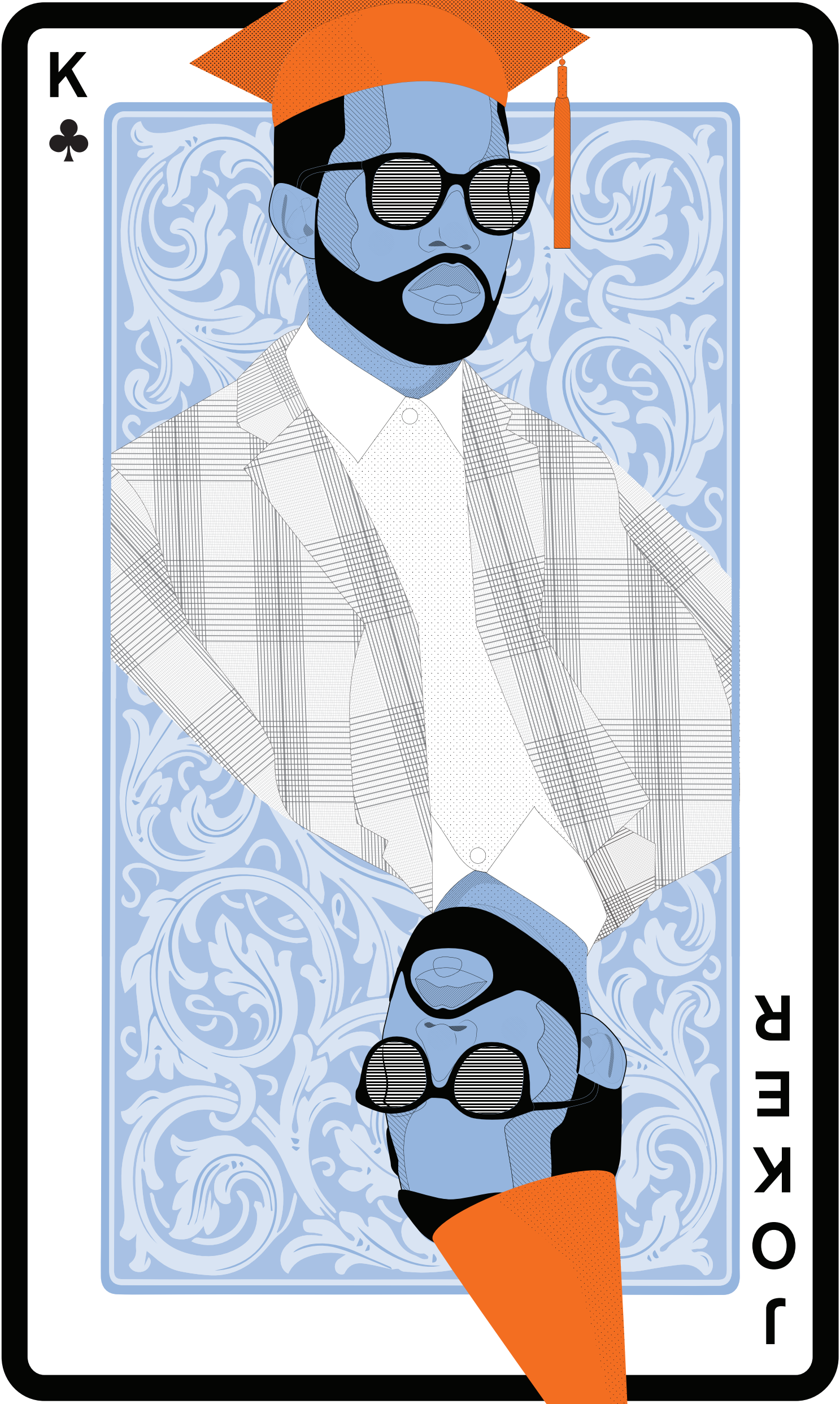
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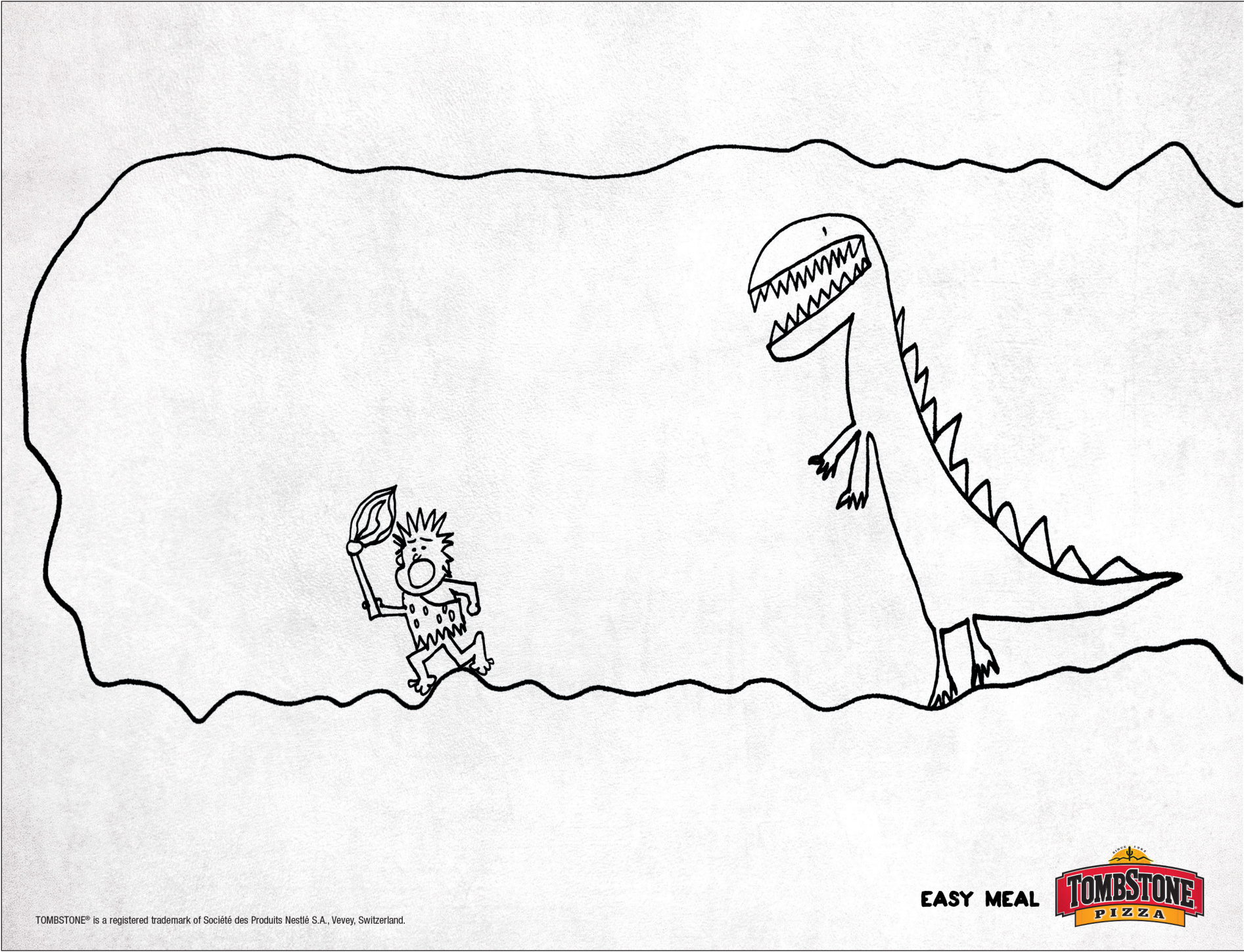
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♥ Kim Gordon Preaches
Punk Politics

♦ Kanye: Gotta Have It

♣ Part-time
Teacher Trouble





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Letter From The Editor

Cursory research indicates that the tradition of setting aside a day for playing tricks on one another is shared by nearly every culture on Earth. In Anglophone countries, it is known as April Fool's Day and falls on the first of that month. The tradition has such staying power that its true origins have vanished in history. Yet this humble institution, for all its ubiquity, is not a national holiday in any country. Accordingly, this month we consider in our pages topics informed, even if vaguely, by notions of short-sightedness, frivolity, or plain wrong-headedness.

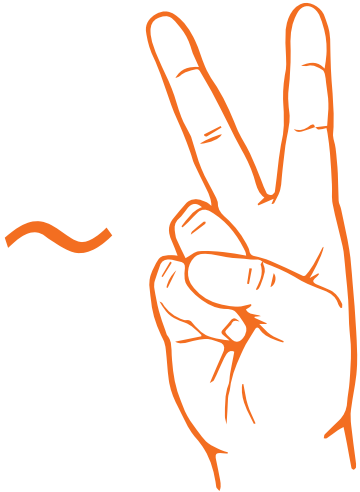
The perils of relying on part-time faculty, a troubling and growing situation at institutions of higher learning, are outlined by News Editor Megan Byrne. Writer Henry Harris highlights the foolishness of engaging in the recent debate over Kanye West's honorary doctorate from the School of the Art Institute

of Chicago, suggesting instead to change the conversation itself. And Taina Vasquez gets the opinion of a high-level official about former New York City Mayor Bloomberg's racist gaffe earlier this year.

Art Director Jordan Whitney Martin and Associate Art Director Berke Yazicioglu chose the typeface Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk for its stability in response to our content, as well as for its austere grace. Akzidenz evokes logic and simplicity, but it is also young and modern, and some say designers often use it to mask their bad work. Our cover is Designer Megan Pryce's adroit interpretation of the responses to Kanye West's honorary degree.

The strength of customs in which members of a culture ritually play tricks on one another may come from the fact that no one can know when misfortune will strike. Traditions like April Fool's Day help

us remember not to take ourselves too seriously, because none of us can truly have control over our own lives. They also remind us that terrible things are always happening and that caution is key in choosing how and to what our responses will be.



WEB EXCLUSIVES

April 2015

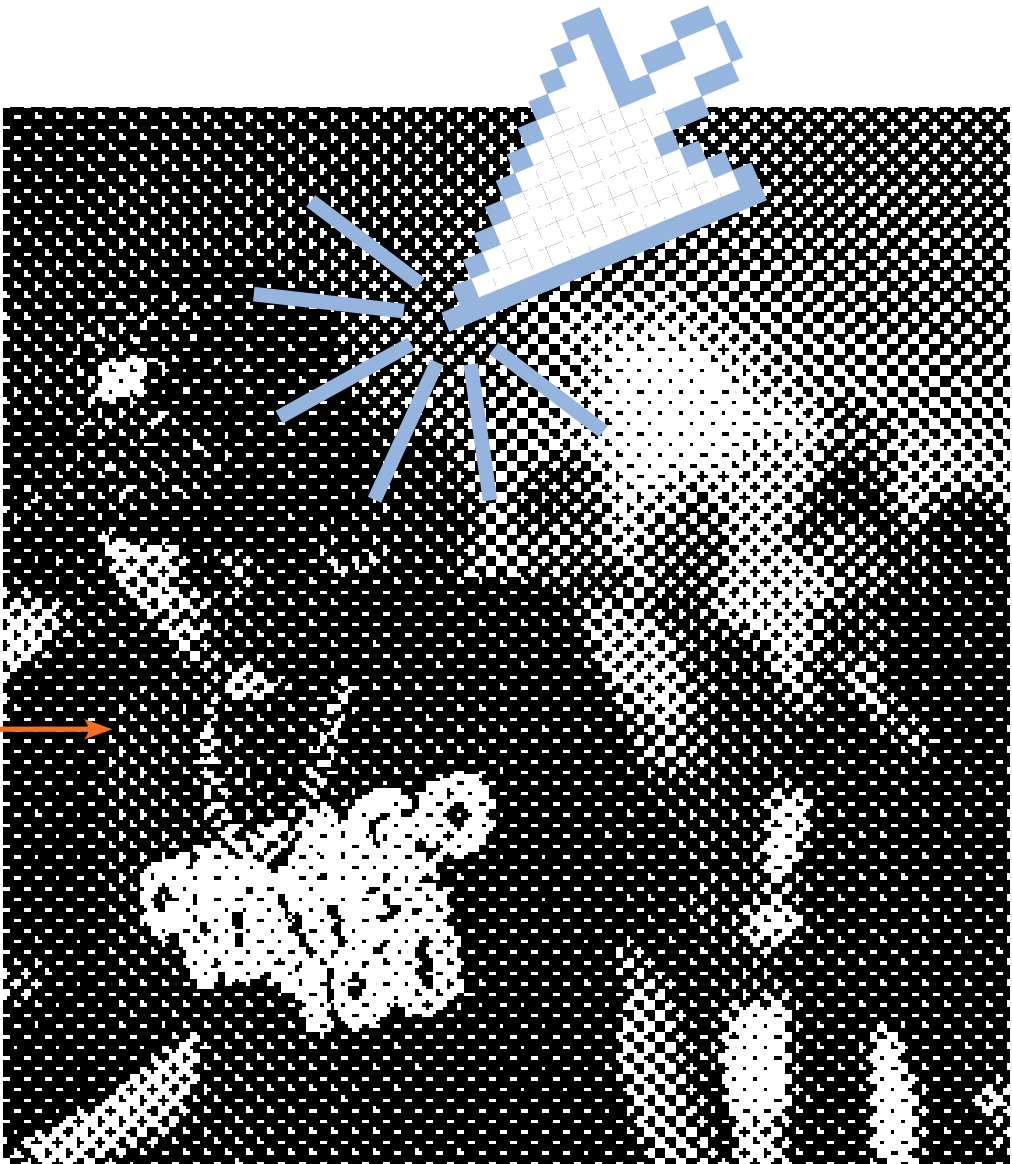
Alison Ruttan at the Cultural Center
Video interview with the SAIC Contemporary Practices faculty member about her solo exhibition.

BFA Show Coverage
Video coverage and more of the annual spring undergraduate art show.

What The F Are We Reading?
Sarah Wheat provides weekly roundups of must-read articles from around the internet.

Maryiah Winding Live Review
Rosie Accola reviews a performance by the SAIC student and hip hop artist.

Book Reviews
Megan Byrne reviews new releases in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.



MFA SHOW 2015

April 25–May 13

saic.edu/mfashow2015

Sullivan Galleries, 33 S. State St., 7th floor

Learn more about all of SAIC's year-end events
at saic.edu/yearendevents.

SAIC School of the Art Institute
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Cover: Kanye Goes (Mid)West by Megan Pryce

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in brief ▶ Megan Byrne

Allegations of US Military Misconduct in Colombia

According to an 800-page independent report conducted by researchers at the Pedagogic University in Bogota, US military officers and contractors sexually abused at least 54 children in Colombia between 2003 and 2007. The report was released to help understand a 50-year conflict between the government and leftist rebel groups like Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which resulted in the loss of nearly 7 million lives.

The report also states that the abuses were often filmed and then sold as pornographic material. Notably, US Sergeant Michael J. Coen and defense contractor Cesar Ruiz drugged and raped a 12-year old girl in 2007. Colombian media reported that before Colombian prosecutors were able to charge the two, they fled the country. The case has since been closed.

Defense Against Pence

On March 26, 2015, Governor Mike Pence of Indiana signed a law that gave businesses the right to discriminate against LGBTQ couples. One day before he signed the legislation into action, a Presbyterian denomination called the Disciples of Christ asked Governor Pence to veto the bill. The church group has held their national convention in the city of Indianapolis every three years since 1989. The Church is expected to cancel the convention in Indianapolis this year, withholding millions of dollars from the city's tourism revenue. Many of the city's convention centers are expected to suffer from similar financial fallout in the future.

Updated SAIC Sexual Assault Policy

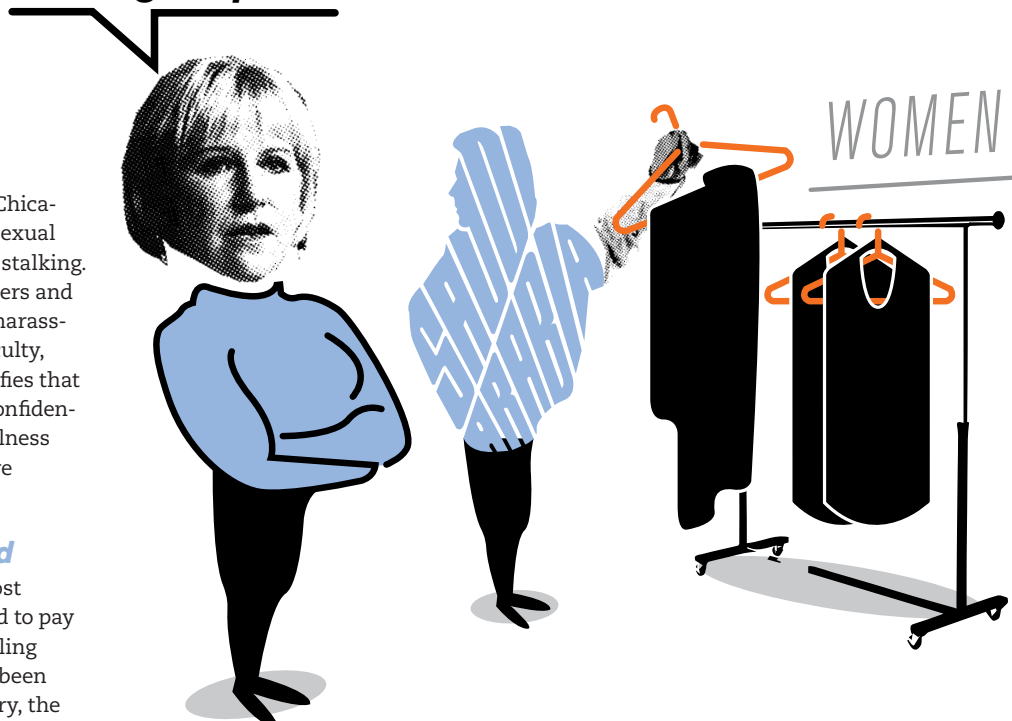
The School of the Art Institute of Chicago recently updated its policy on sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking. The report requires faculty members and SAIC employees to report sexual harassment or assault to the Dean of Faculty, Lisa Wainwright. The policy specifies that students' claims may still speak confidentially to the counselors in the Wellness Center, who, under Illinois Law, are required to retain confidentiality.

Batgirl Comic Cover Pulled

A variant cover for DC Comics' most recent Batgirl, which was supposed to pay homage to the 1988 story "The Killing Joke," written by Alan Moore, has been officially cancelled. In Moore's story, the Joker attacks and sexually assaults Batgirl, leaving her in a wheelchair.

The "misogynistic" cover depicts the Joker standing behind Batgirl (who is crying) with a silver gun over her shoulder, drawing with blood on her face with his finger. The cover was pulled by the artist Rafael Albuquerque who, according to the Guardian, said, "It has become clear that for others, [the cover] touched a very important nerve. I respect these opinions and, despite whether the discussion is right or wrong, no opinion should be discredited."

No, I'll keep wearing the pants.



Sweden and Saudi Arabia

After Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström was blocked by Saudi Arabia from speaking about democracy and women's rights at the gathering of the Arab League in Cairo, Egypt, Sweden cancelled a major arms deal with Saudi Arabia. Last year, the deal brought Sweden 1.3 billion dollars.

Following Wallström's comment that "the explanation we have been given is that Sweden has highlighted the situation

for democracy and human rights, and that is why they do not want me to speak," Saudi Arabia pulled their ambassador from Stockholm and ceased issuing or renewing visas to Swedish citizens.

Wallström has strained Swedish relations in the Middle East since her introduction as the Foreign Minister. This year, Sweden recognized Palestine as a state, causing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to claim that Scandinavian governments were trying to topple him.

FIBER AND MATERIAL STUDIES SUMMER 2015

Hot Projects: Glass Production Workshop

Christine Tarkowski

3W1: May 26 - June 12

In this course students will conceive of and produce their art works/design projects in Ignite's state of the art glass facility. Students are introduced to the practice and principles of hot glass: hand blowing, mold blowing, hot casting, and cold working.

Printed Fabric Workshop

Erin Minckley Chlaghmo

6W1: May 26 - July 2

Beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels are given technical guidance in the use of dyes and pigments on fabrics. Both hand-painting and hand-printing processes are explored; processes may include: silkscreen, photographic techniques, stencil and stamp printing, and direct painting.

Woven Structures Workshop

Christy Matson

3W2: June 15 - July 2

Beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels are given technical guidance for exploration of the formal and expressive properties of woven structures.

Papermaking I

Andrea Peterson

3W4: July 27 - August 14

The course covers traditional papermaking, fiber preparation, chemistry of color, and applications of paper in both two- and three-dimensional formats.

See full course descriptions and learn more at saic.edu/fiber

IMAGE: Christie Carlson, Advanced Print for Fabric, 2013

SAIC



Food Fools

► Alexia Casanova

The lazy foodie takes little risk, that is, because risk requires effort. Some of you have a real passion for food and have gone out of your way to produce culinary creations. We are dedicating this month's Lazy Foodie to all of you who have taken foodie risks and failed, and also, to all of you who are just plain stupid in the kitchen.



Alexia once set a birthday cake on fire because of tenacious trick candles.

I once made jalapeño yogurt. With both jalapeño extract and jalapeño chunks. It was horrible.
— Megan

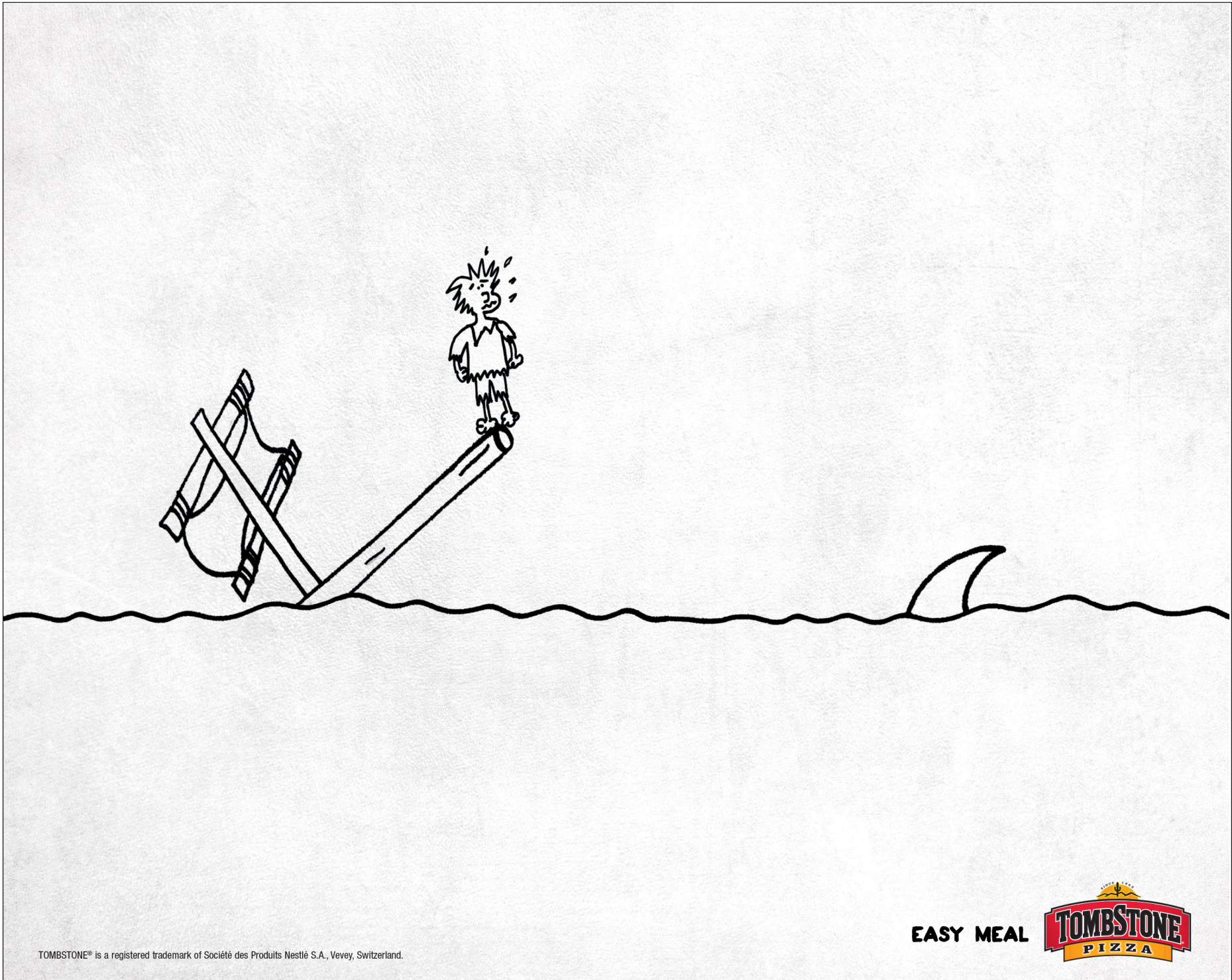
Last time I tried baking, I made a cake but forgot to put baking powder. It came out looking like a weird extra large sope [traditional Mexican dish resembling an extra thick tortilla]. I tried to eat it anyway but it was so dense I choked on it real bad. I almost died from cake asphyxiation.
— Laura

We were roasting a whole pig in the backyard and hadn't really thought of the cutting part. We ended up butterflyfing it on tarps on the living room floor with a simple kitchen knife.
— Olivia

I tried to follow the crêpes recipe you posted in the February issue. I realized I had no eggs and was too lazy to get any from the shop, so I made the crêpes anyway — without eggs. They looked like flat strainers and tasted like paper.
— Maeva



illustration by Megan Pryce





Pat's Pix Kanye West Edition

► Patrick Reynolds

Kanye West: a true renaissance man! I say this without so much as a drip of irony. I have been a huge fan of Kanye's for close to a decade, and while I have loved and enjoyed all of his albums, I have been equally inspired by his innumerable forays into multidisciplinary artistry and creative direction. With that, let us take a trip through Dr. West's career with my 5 Kanye Pix.



1. Touch the Sky Music Video (2006)

This music video features Kanye playing an Evel Knievel-inspired daredevil character (whose girlfriend is played by Pamela Anderson). The video itself is fairly silly and straightforward, but it is noteworthy for the small controversy it generated: The real Evel Knievel sued Kanye for trademark infringement, accusing him of copying his signature style. His lawsuit read, in part, "The vulgar, sexual, and racially-charged nature of the Infringing Music Video is directly counter to Evel Knievel's long-established public persona, utterly inconsistent with his toy products and appeal to children, and harms the reputation of the Evel Knievel trademark, and the Evel Knievel® costume." The two eventually settled things outside of court shortly before Knievel's death, with Knievel saying of West, "I thought he was a wonderful guy and quite a gentleman."

2. PASTELLE/Past Tell (2007-2009)

Kanye has made headlines over the past couple of years for his collaborations with Adidas, Nike, Louis Vuitton, and APC, but Yeezy first began generating hype for his love for fashion design in 2007 and 2008 by slowly unveiling pieces of a line of clothing alternately called Past Tell and Pastelle. Kanye appeared in public a few times rocking a bold varsity jacket and a full-zip hoodie from the rumored label, but mere hours after purported lookbook images from the debut Pastelle line leaked to the Internet in 2009, it was officially announced that the brand was cancelled.

3. We Were Once a Fairytale (2009)

Kanye stars as a parallel-universe version of himself in this short film that Spike Jonze wrote and directed; it was their second collaboration after West's *Flashing Lights* music video. The short features a heavily-intoxicated Kanye wandering around in a club while his own song (*Heartless*) plays in the background. The first part of the short follows Kanye as he pitifully tries (and fails) to dance and hit on women on the dancefloor, after which the film takes a bizarre, magical-realist turn at the end. It's a self-deprecating, creepy, and truly funny piece in which Kanye reclaims his supposedly egotistical persona, and it gets extra points for its absolute weirdness.

4. Yeezus Tour (2013)

I saw the Yeezus tour. It was crazy. It was like a conceptual Kanye West rock opera. It featured (among other things) a mountain that split into a volcano, artificial snow, a giant floating animated LED screen, tons of dancers, a demon with glowing red eyes, and White Jesus. Kanye had his trademark auto-tuned "rant" where he talked about how much he loved Kim. His face was covered most of the time by a jewel-encrusted Margiela mask. The show also opened with an amazing set by Kendrick Lamar. The Yeezus tour was a crowning achievement and a truly impeccable production.

5. Season (2015)

Kanye just dropped this zine on March 23, which features a collection of images from photographer Jackie Nickerson for Kanye's new line of clothes for Adidas. Nickerson's *Terrain* series, which depicts a number of farmers and agricultural workers in Africa, was received with acclaim throughout 2014; Kanye's collaboration with Nickerson is the latest in a number of visual art partnerships with artists as diverse as Takashi Murakami and George Condo. The zine was free for customers at a limited number of international stockists, and it was limited to a print run of 2,000 copies.

Yo, Pat, I'm really happy for you and I'mma let you finish, but the readers should know they can read more about me on page 24!





My goal today is to answer your questions as quickly and concisely as possible. While it's always important to be comfortable with the gray areas of life, sometimes we need to get the testicles rolling. We need a cut and dry answer. We need to pick a card. Here we go!

1. Female, 20:

Are discount at-home pregnancy tests just as reliable as the fancy pharmacy ones?

Fanny:

Some tests are better than others regardless of the price. Also, everyone's body is different — some women will have enough pregnancy hormones early on to get accurate results and some will not. You should note that some tests are expired, and still sold in stores which can result in an unsettling testing experience. Once the line in my pregnancy test was so faint, I debated buying a magnifying glass. The tests I recommend are First Response and CVS Brand. Remember to take the test in the morning when you wake up, when your urine is dense. Also, taking the test about a week after your missed period makes for more accurate results.
2. Female, 21:

Is there any really reliable way to NOT get HPV?

Fanny:

You just have to use a condom correctly. Or not have sex, which we all know isn't an option. Women (and people with female genitals) take on the physical burden of HPV and most sexually transmitted diseases (thanks for nothing, GOD). Get tested regularly, talk to your doctor about the HPV shots available, and schedule regular pap smears. (Men, there are HPV shots available for you too. Talk to your doctor.)
3. Male, 25:

Do asexual people masturbate?

Fanny:

People of all types masturbate. Masturbation isn't always about concrete sexual attraction
4. Female, 23:

Can I get pregnant from pre-cum.

Fanny:

YES! 🙄
5. Female, 20:

Does Mountain Dew really deplete your sperm count?

Fanny:

No. But excessive caffeine and Yellow #5 are not great for your bod. Try to incorporate salad into your diet. Maybe feed kale to your sex partner, naked! Kale and kum, yum yum.

6. Female, 20:

What does 'throw the pussy like it's famous' really mean?

Fanny:

I think it means that you are desired by many, have cash to make it rain, and have many hot sexual partners. It also may mean that you fuck so good that you're famous for it.
7. Female, 19:

Does the best love actually come from a thug?

Fanny:

Some of us are attracted to people who are dangerous. Just make sure he/she doesn't force you to rob a bank, steal, or murder. Let them do the thuggin', and you can do the humpin'.
8. Female, 25:

How can I prevent queefing?

Fanny:

Queefing happens. Embrace the queef. Don't let the excess air being pushed out of your vagina make you stressed. If someone makes you feel ashamed about queefing, dump them immediately.
9. Female, 26:

How do I clean my vibrator? Can I put it in the dishwasher? Mine is called "The Dolphin," and I thought it was waterproof, but it turns out it isn't.

Fanny:

Buy a spray bottle and mix one part white vinegar or lemon juice, and eight parts water. Spray your vibrator and wipe with a damp cloth.
10. Female, 21:

I'm a lesbian. Do I need to see a gynecologist?

Fanny:

YES.
11. Female, 23:

If I put a condom on a unpeeled banana, can I masturbate with it?

Fanny:

Yes! You can even eat the banana after.
12. Male, 22:

Is butt crack the new cleavage?

Fanny:

No.
13. Male, 21:

Can you masturbate too much?

Fanny:

If you are missing appointments, critiques, and assignments due to obsessive masturbation and do not know how to stop, see your doctor or consult a therapist.
14. Female, 20:

If I think Walter Massey is cute, should I tell him?

Fanny:

No. Keep it professional.
15. Female, 19:

Where does the term "Aunt Flo" come from?

- Fanny:

There's an article in Cosmo magazine that says members of the CIA made up the phrase during World War II as code for "Having sex with a woman on her period." But Cosmopolitan is also a bullshit magazine that promotes generalized stereotypes of hyper sexualized hetero-normative behaviors. So, I don't know ... get back to me on this.
16. Male, 22:

If my boyfriend hasn't made concrete plans to see me in two weeks but he texts me all the time, what's going on?

Fanny:

Dump him.
17. Male, 19:

A few days ago my boyfriend grabbed the excess skin on my stomach and started to mime it as a steering wheel and drive it as a joke?

Fanny:

DUMP him.
18. Female, 19:

I just found out my boyfriend is a republican?

Fanny:

Tough one ... dump him.
19. Female, 20:

I found a photo of my sister in my boyfriend's bag?

Fanny:

Dump him.
20. Female, 18:

My boyfriend is pressuring me to ... let him pee in my butt?

Fanny:

Dump him.
- Fanny:

Bonus question:
21. Male, 22:

I came on my girlfriend's face without asking. I feel really bad, but she is still so mad. What do I do?

Fanny:

Tell her I told her to dump you.

○
Stumped by sex? Frustrated by fucking? Reeling from a relationship? Fanny wants to hear all about it! Write to dearfanny@fnewsmagazine.com with your questions.



Melissa Leandro

This month, Paula Calvo interviewed the winners of the Dimensions of an Artist Grant, which was sponsored by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Student Government. The three artists talked about their work and production for their upcoming exhibition hosted by the school's Student Union Galleries. Paula's chat with Melissa Leandro is reproduced below; visit fnewsmagazine.com for Paula's interviews with the two remaining Dimensions of an Artist grant recipients, Sheika Lugtu and Laura Anne Gordon. The opening reception will be on May 4 from 4-6pm, and the exhibition will remain on view until May.

Why is it important for you to expose multiple layers in your work?

My art practice is an extension of myself, specifically my memories, family histories, and mementos gathered along the way. In the same way my personality has multiple layers, so does the manifestation of my art practice. I bounce between drawing, textiles, and sculpture when developing my work. This flexibility in material choice reflects my attitudes toward cultural identity. I choose to experiment with how I identify and expose myself through the scope of culture, nationality, class, and gender. These characters are not black and white, but lie in a world of grey. As a first generation American, I'm interested in my personal duality within culture and language.

I've found that I often parallel the disparity of English and Spanish by intuitively overlaying contrasting materials to find unlikely combinations of process. For instance, in my weavings, I often build up multiple layers of fiber (plastic, paper, felt, yarn) and fuse them together to create a new substrate. The materials are often cheap castaways that have a relationship to domestic objects, like upholstery, tablecloths, and polyester fabric. Through the process of weaving, elements of the original materials are hidden, exposed, and thus fragmented. The goal is to be left with a piece that evokes a certain kind of "homey" aesthetic — specifically, how dissimilar components can manifest thoughts of nostalgia, family history, and tradition through use of pattern, imagery, and textures.

How does Spanglish and growing up in Miami translate into your choice of materials?

Spanglish, for those not familiar with the term, is the use of both English and Spanish words when having a conversation. In Miami, it's quite common for people to speak in English but regularly use Spanish words or phrases as a form of slang. Although I don't live in Miami anymore, I still occasionally use Spanglish, and process thoughts and memories in both languages. As time progresses, it becomes difficult to differentiate whether memories were in one language or another — things are lost in translation.

For myself, this mixing of languages has often led to the creation of new slang words. I believe this correlates to the mixing of material textures in my practice. I combine natural with synthetic, bright with muted, digital with the analog, in the same way Miami was a collision of cultures, music, food and so on. In the larger context, there was also a huge contrast between the rural landscapes of Costa Rica and the more urban, party town that is Miami, Florida. I find comfort in merging the physical qualities of a very rural landscape with the rich, hyper-extreme colors that surround my life in the US.

As a bilingual Latina woman, what are your expectations for your own work and upcoming exhibition?

I'd like my work to constantly generate — or branch off — into new ideas. My process of making and thinking through ideas never completely ends. I often go back and forth with imagery and process by using recurring marks and patterns from finished or in-progress works. A project that starts off as a cyanotype on paper may be translated into a jacquard weaving, but in between the processes there are several iterations of the same base image. It's a never-ending process that motivates me to keep making work. I'm focused on spending time in my studio, having a dialog about my practice, as well as learning about other artists.

How do you challenge "traditional woman's work"?

My practice involves craft-based processes that were once, and at times still are, largely under the umbrella of domestic female roles or female pastimes: sewing, embroidery, crochet, knitting and weaving, to list a few. I believe the marginalized status of women throughout history has a huge effect on the lack of recognition from the "fine art world" when it comes to noting value in other materials. Particularly materials and processes deemed as craft. For example, I believe cloth is large part of who we are; we have an intimate connection to this material because it physically lives on our bodies and moves into our spaces. To our [craft artists'] benefit, craft has always been a social practice: It's about communicating skills to each other, passing them down, and refining the techniques. This plays a huge part in my work as I think about traditions: what gets carried on from my own family history, and what fades away through distance and time. I see the "fine art world" as being largely dominated by male painters and sculptors, even now. We still have a long way to go before we see an equal number of female artists being represented and exhibited in galleries and museums. However, I am optimistic the change is happening now!

What artist are you a big fan of?

Too many to list, but here are a few I've been thinking about lately: Ann Hamilton, Christy Matson, Lilli Carré, Ebony Patterson, Rachel Uffner, Amanda Ross-Ho, and José Lerma.



Are you a current SAIC student or faculty member and want to share your work for a future 5 Questions? Send a brief introduction and portfolio link to editors@fnewsmagazine.com.



Mancha (stain), 2014
Jacquard Weaving, Natural Cotton. 41" X 45.5"



Threshold no. 2, 2014
Synthetic weaving, plastic, rubber, electrical tape. Heat fused. 58" x 42"



Untitled, 2014
Toner Transfer on Wood. 23"x34"

Photos courtesy of the artist

ALBUM REVIEWS

► Ada Wolin



Aureate Gloom
shows mature self-reflection

Of Montreal have a thing for titles. Usually wordy, erudite, and often plain mystifying. *Aureate Gloom* is hardly different. However, it predicts the mature self-reflection that the band achieves on their 13th album, released in early March. Smooth, golden gloominess fairly describes the band's approach to songwriting in general. A darkly sweet formula, with heaviness hiding behind dancey symphonies. On the offset, Of Montreal are not breaking new ground on this album, sticking instead with the golden formula that served them best on the beloved 2007 *Hissing Fauna, Are You the Destroyer*, a meld of funk, glam, anger and sunshine. Bassem Sabry jaunts along with a hopping bass and falsetto, fitting right in with their earlier work. Maybe it is simply the enthusiasm the band seems to bring to it, but *Aureate Gloom* somehow escapes sounding like overflow material of past albums. It feels rather like songwriter Kevin Barnes has yet to exhaust his glitzy muse. The overall listenability is perhaps where the album's merits will come under debate. *Aureate Gloom* rocks a little harder in some parts, like the punky, almost deceptively simplistic *Apollyon of Blue Room* and dissonant thrasher *Cthonian Dirge For Uruk the Other*. However, the album also satisfyingly takes its' time to slow down with songs like *Estocadas*, a comfortably downbeat track that takes up the space that some of the dancier songs seem reluctant to do. At times the album seems to make even too much sense; its ultimate solidity maybe holding it back from the glimmer of its sparks of genius. But those moments are there, and Barnes' ability to work his trademark off-kilter sensibilities into logical structure is a testament to the band's irrepressible strangeness.



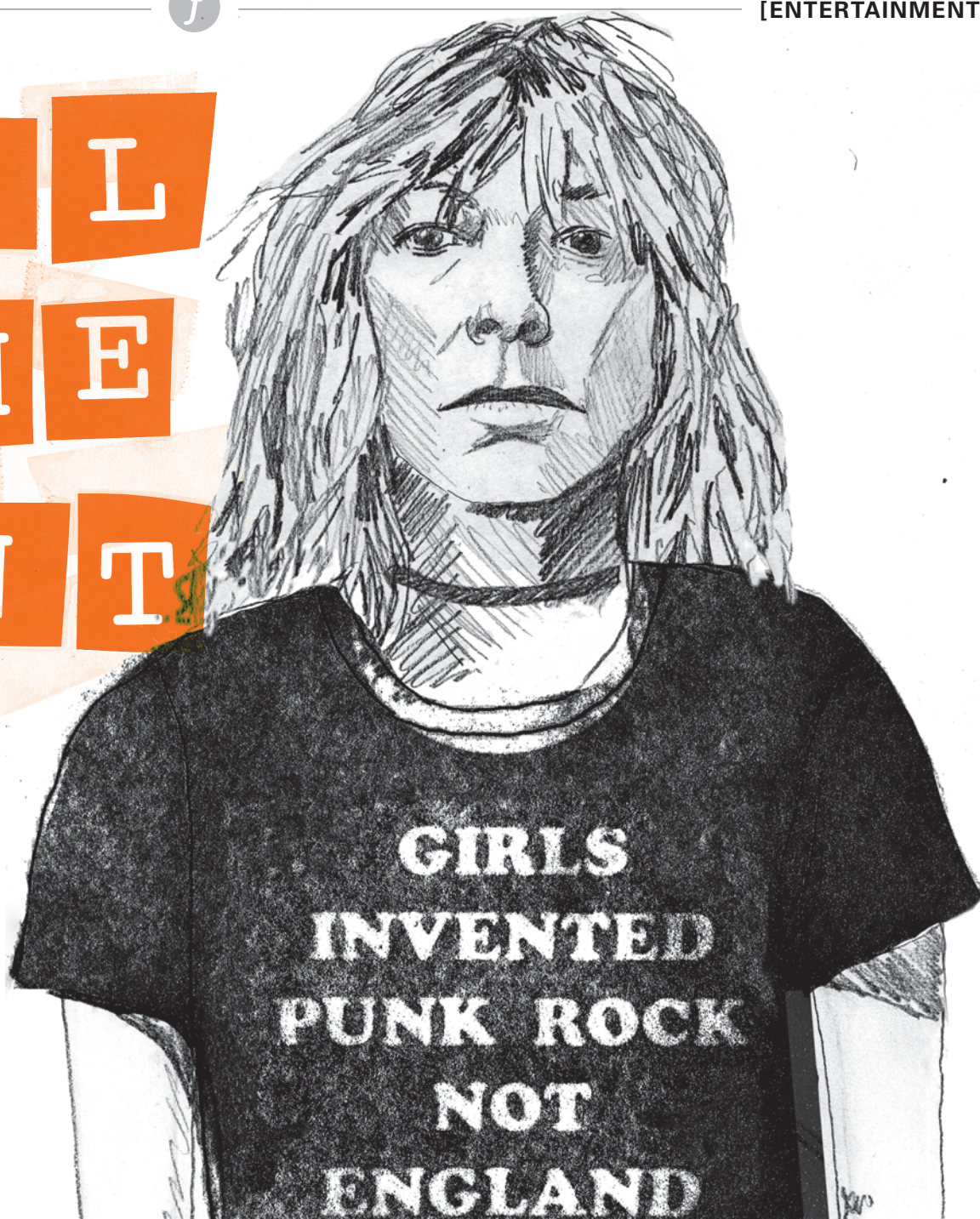
Viet Cong
formulates dystopian punk

Canadian group Viet Cong are restrained by the label of "Post-Punk," a term swallowed in the past fifteen years by bands like The Strokes and The Killers. Their eponymous debut album goes beyond, into the depths of postmortem-punk, like a resurrection of punk in some dystopian future, led by the icy vocals of some far-off general. The album is brief and brutal, but in less than 35 minutes it develops a compelling narrative. The album starts out with the thunderous *Newspaper Spoons*, a manifesto for the rest of the album; the first jump into cold, noisy terror. The song sounds as if it is rattling around inside a giant chemical drum. Vocalist Matt Flagel's voice drones in flat harmony like some far-off army coming ever closer, eventually de-escalating into an atmospheric synth garden. If *Newspaper Spoons* is the thundering general, *Pointless Experience* is the hopeful revolutionary. Flagel's voice reaching a warmer shade of pathos, still distant, but moving beyond the cold formality of krautrock imitation. *March of Progress* brings back the militaristic drum beat, but lapses into woven layers of sprawling psychedelia, influenced perhaps by the Animal Collective breed of sunny electro-pop. This is where the band reaches a threshold and shows their range; where Flagel asks a pertinent question: "What is the difference between love and hate?" As the band glides between satisfying hookiness and off-kilter dissonance, those words seem to anthemize the query that surrounds the music itself — a nowhere land somewhere between pop utopia and industrial purgatory.

Ada Wolin is a freshman in the BFAW department. When she's not trying really hard to finally finish Ulysses, she's drinking too much coffee and practicing the musical saw.

GRRRL IN THE FRONT

KIM GORDON PREACHES PUNK POLITICS AT THE CHICAGO HUMANITIES FESTIVAL



Kim Gordon walked onstage and my concept of linear time folded into itself.

► Rosie Accola

On February 26, the Chicago Humanities Festival partnered with the Music Box Theatre to curate a night of conversation between Sonic Youth frontwoman Kim Gordon and the CHF's associate artistic director, Alison Cuddy, to discuss her highly anticipated new memoir, *Girl in a Band*.

The event was sold out. 700 people crammed themselves into the Music Box to catch a glimpse of the feminist icon whom Rolling Stone once referred to as "the Godmother of punk." And I was one of them.

Up until this night, I had about as much knowledge of actual music journalism as I could garner through repeated viewings of *Almost Famous*. I was just a staff writer in a plaid shift dress with a bone-deep love of women and punk and a press pass. When I showed my ticket to the usher he glanced around the reserved section looking for my spot, I helped him look while peeking at seats reserved for The Chicago Tribune and Pitchfork.

"I can't find it now, do you want to just sit here?" He pointed to a seat in the very front row. I nodded mutely, still trying to grapple with the fact that I was sharing space with Kim Gordon and someone who worked for Pitchfork.

He came back a couple minutes later, "I found your seat ... but it's a couple rows back. Do you want to just stay here?" I

stifled a "hell yes" because I was The Press, opting instead for a refined, "Yes, please." He found the orange sign that said "F Newsmagazine" and stuck it on the back of my chair. While I waited for the program to start, I chatted with my fellow accidental front row-mate, Elizabeth, about Judith Butler as we listened to the hired pipe organ play covers of early '90s hits. Already, this night seemed like a bizarre dream.

Since the proceeds from the event went towards Girls Rock! Chicago, a non-profit organization that empowers girls through a rock and roll camp program, the opening act was Alex Lund, a former camper. Lund has been working with Girls Rock! Chicago since she was just nine years old, and as a result she already embodied the best parts of punk: complex rhythmic structures and leather pants.

"I can't believe I'm here tonight," she gushed. I nodded along in agreement. "You and me both," I thought.

After a short talk about the work of the Chicago Humanities Festival, Kim Gordon walked onstage and my concept of linear time folded into itself.

There she was, barely ten feet from me. My punk rock muse and number-one art inspo. "Holy shit," I gasped, and looked over at Elizabeth to make sure I wasn't hallucinating.

"I bet she still does her own eyeliner," Elizabeth whispered.

Alison Cuddy adjusted her microphone. "At the start of your book, you ask a question: 'Did the '90s ever really exist?' Can you explain what you meant by that?"

Gordon went on to say that it was "extreme and in some ways incredibly unexciting." Sonic Youth was working on recording Goo, and fans and critics alike were accusing them of selling out. It was "a weird journey."

She touched on moments that have now been firmly ingrained into the rock and roll zeitgeist, referring to Nirvana as "an explosion" that "didn't want to be exploited." She referred to Spike Jonze using his first name only and casually referenced working with artists like director Sofia Coppola and Bikini Kill frontwoman Kathleen Hanna. It was then that it hit me: Here was a person who was firmly entrenched in the mythos of riot grrrl.

Throughout the night she was incredibly mellow, almost serene. When a randomly incensed audience member began shouting about "hipster bullshit" and "movements," she laughed it off without a thought, stating that she didn't have a movement.

She referred to punk as "a cultural opening," though she said that her primary practice was still visual art. "My art's more theoretical, or something," she clarified. She also talked at length about her first band, Interjection, and how she was drawn to punk due to its "performative spirit." It became clear throughout



the night that Gordon was so much more than just a frontwoman.

"It's hard to be famous and want to do other things and be taken seriously," Gordon explained. In a way, it made sense: How do you handle being an integral part of a cultural entity while still managing to cultivate your own art practice? To elaborate, Gordon talked about seeing Keanu Reeves' band. "It was sad. He didn't want to face the audience."

While she was writing her memoir, Gordon also embarked on a new musical endeavour, *Body/Head*, with guitarist Bill Nace. She described this project as "filmic in nature."

Eventually, it was time for Alison and Kim to officiate a question and answer session with the audience. I glanced over at Elizabeth: "Should I ask a question?"

"Well, you are a journalist." She had been calling me "the journalist" all night long. "Besides, no one wants to be the one to ask the first question. Everyone will be so relieved." Before I could even think, she elbowed my hand into the air.

"Oh, we have our first question!" A girl with a mohawk walked over and handed me a microphone.

I took a deep breath and looked into the eyes of my punk rock north star.

"Hi Kim."

"Hi." Holy shit Kim Gordon just said hi to me okay holy fuck.

I asked her if she knew anything about the riot grrrl or zine revivals that

were happening around the Internet. She didn't, and asked me to explain. For a moment I felt horrible. My incoherent gender studies 101 ramblings were confusing Kim Gordon.

"I mean, do you think that the current generation of feminism has deviated from third wave or riot grrrl?"

She said that change from generation to generation was inevitable and that she could definitely see that this generation was more aware that gender wasn't a fixed point. I could have sworn I saw her smile.

I handed the mic back to the girl with the mohawk and allowed my brain to fully dissolve into a state of fangirl mania. My notes for this moment read, "Holy shit she was conscious of my existence for a solid thirty seconds."

At the end of the night, Elizabeth gave me a ride back to the Loop so she would have "karma for good parking all week."

"I feel sorta bad for confusing Kim Gordon," I confessed as I fiddled with the heat in her gloriously warm car.

"Dude, you didn't confuse her. She asked you a follow up question — she was curious! She didn't do that with anybody else." It suddenly dawned on me that if a conversation entails a mutual curiosity between two parties, then I totally had a conversation with Kim Gordon. My little riot grrrl heart grew three sizes.

Once I was back at my dorm, I

collapsed happily onto my bed. I was flushed and perspiring, fully aware that this sweat-soaked, dizzying bliss that I was experiencing was the product of rock and roll.

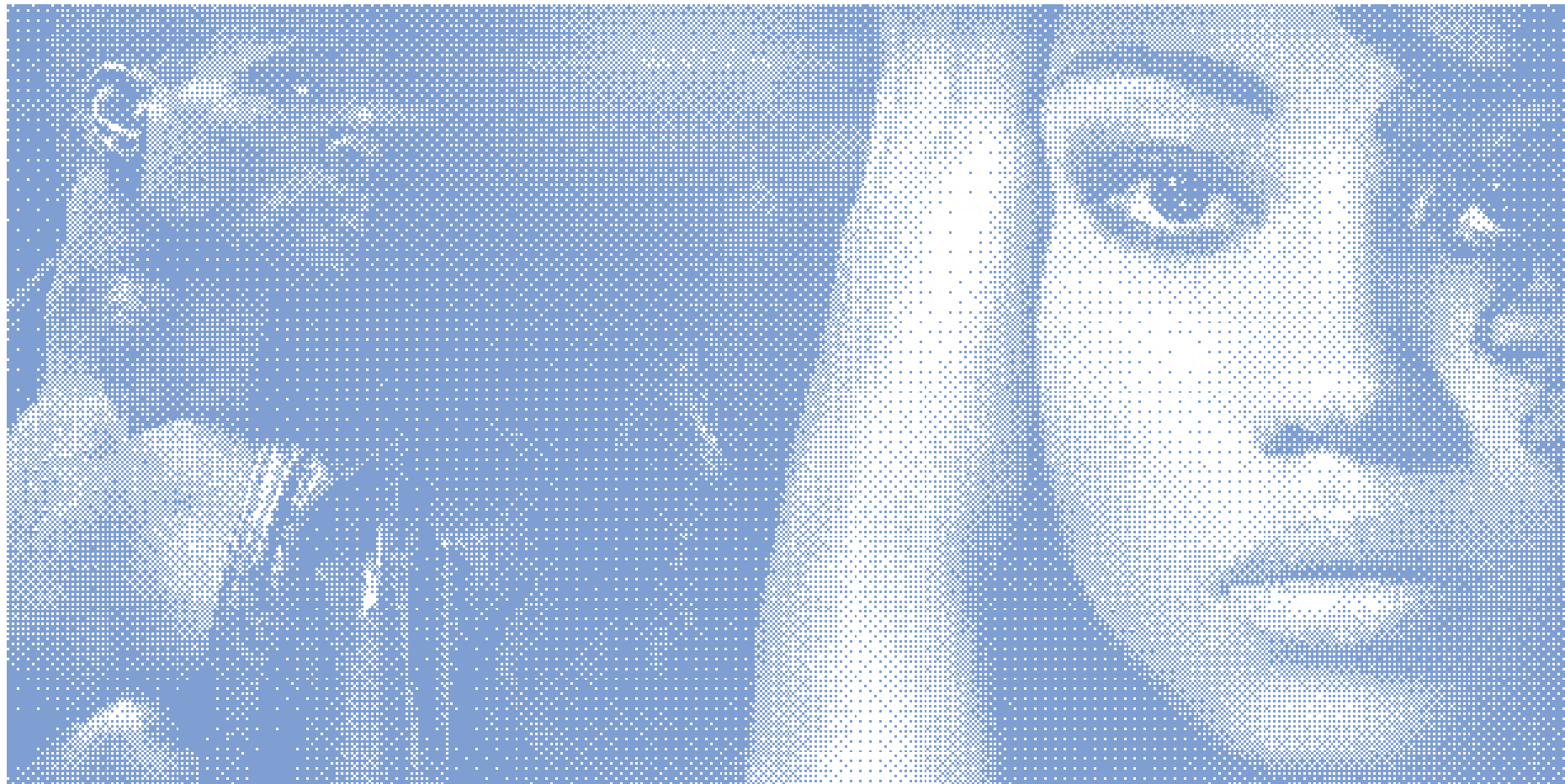
Cat Stevens referred to rock music as a "detached and heavenly fraternity" during his Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction speech. It is a subset of culture that is both wild and strange, yet I have never been more excited to call myself a part of something.

Most people get inducted to the world of rock and roll on a tour bus or a skeezy mosh pit. I ascended to the profound level of musical wonder at the Music Box Theatre, and it was a wild night, to say the least. I was bursting with energy, a frantic and willing participant in the rock and roll mythos of which I had always dreamed — if only for a night.

○

Rosie Accola is a first year writing student who still hasn't really recovered from making eye contact with Kim Gordon. If she had a band it would be called "Hurl Scouts" and they'd throw Girl Scout cookies into the crowd as a gimmick.

How do you handle being an integral part of a cultural entity while still managing to cultivate your own art practice?



HER URBAN FICTION DEBUT

SAIC Staffer Reveals Passion for Writing in *A Deceitful Love*

► Rosie Accola

Most writers know that finishing a manuscript, can be a grueling process lasting months or even years. For School of the Art Institute of Chicago security guard, Joselyn Crout, it took just 29 days to complete her first novel, *A Deceitful Love*. The book started out as a New Year's resolution and has already been published by Mz. Lady Presents. *A Deceitful Love* is currently available as an E-Book, and a print edition will soon follow.

The novel follows Mulan as she deals with her drug-addicted mother and the emotional void left by her lack of a father. Soon, she meets "Mr. Sexy-man himself," Santiago Fairbanks. At first he seems like the perfect man. However, soon darker aspects of his personality are revealed, causing Mulan to question what she's willing to do for love. Together they navigate the perils and trials of forgiveness, pain and all the other facets of a deceitful love.

For Crout, being a published author has been a lifelong dream. "I've been writing since I was twelve, and I've always been into urban fiction, [a literary genre defined as much by characters' socio-economic realities and culture as by its setting], but I never really thought I would write my own book. I remember reading books and getting to the end; they'll have this note that says, 'All aspiring authors please email your synopsis and your first three chapters here,' and I did it one day."

Urban fiction encompasses a wide variety of smaller sub-genres such as romances and dramas. Publishing companies like Ms. Shan Presents often specialize within the genre, encouraging aspiring writers to send in sections of their manuscripts for consideration. Ms. Shan Presents is considerably more intimate and welcoming than larger publishing houses. The publisher emphasizes fostering a dialogue between editors, writers, and cover designers. It is one member of a tight knit subset of the publishing world where most of its writers are familiar with one another's work. Crout cites Ms. Shan, the namesake and head writer of Ms. Shan Presents, as one of her main inspirations as a writer.

Ms. Shan Presents refers to its writers as "Authoresses," since all their

writers are female. The authoresses are also encouraged to pick a pen name, and Crout's pen name is J'Diarr. She works closely with Authoress Mz. Lady P who has written 10 books for Ms. Shan Presents within a year. She is well known among the urban fiction circuit for books like *Thug Passion* and *Living for Love*, *Dying for Loyalty*. In addition to writing full time, Mz. Lady P also started her own publishing company. Crout was Ms. Lady P's first signed author.

Oftentimes the most challenging part of writing is finding the time to do it. In Crout's case she was able to find time to write while still working long hours as a security guard. "The hardest part of writing a book is actually finishing it. I don't ever want to feel like I'm forcing

I don't ever want to feel like I'm forcing myself to write something because then it's going to be shit.

myself to write something because then it's going to be shit. So I usually just stop and play with my daughter or call my mom or my publisher, then I'm good to go," she said.

In addition to Crout, Mz. Lady P also represents a writer known as ShaToKa, who recently released her first book *Cliche to a Dark Path*. "She's my pen-sister, that's what we call each other. I'm definitely tight with the people who work with Mz. Lady P as well as Ms. Shan," Crout said. The writers, publishers, and cover designers for Ms. Shan Presents are exceedingly supportive of one another. Their sense of community combats the idea that writing is an isolating practice. These writers and artists are clearly dedicated to producing exciting work, without sacrificing writers' health or social lives. "It's harder for me to find time to read other work, but if my publisher hears that, she'll be like, 'What did I tell you? You always have to find time for yourself, don't sit in front of the computer screen all day long.' Sometimes

she'll call and check up on me because she knows I'll sit there all day and write if I could. She's a very good friend."

Crout's passion for writing is evident, her excitement about the publishing process and future projects infectious. She is already planning her next book, *Married to an Opp*. Genius.com's Chicago Slang Dictionary defines an "opp" as "any enemy, rival, hater or person you don't like," as in, anyone in opposition.

"It's what people call the police nowadays, I don't know why. I guess it's just because they're the opposite of whatever wrong thing they're doing. It's going to be good," said Crout.

For *A Deceitful Love*, Crout was stuck on a title for a while, but she collaborated with Ms. Shan and Mz. Lady P to find the perfect fit. She wants people to know that despite what the title may suggest, *A Deceitful Love* is more than a love story. "Love stories sell, but you have to have something more than that," Crout says, "You want it to be shocking. You want to bring all these emotions out in the reader while they're reading it." She also plans on exploring other facets of urban fiction like dramas and action-based stories.

A Deceitful Love has been met thus far with excitement. "I've gained almost 2,000 friends on Facebook now that I'm a published author. Sometimes people message me to tell me that they're excited for my book," Crout said.

One reviewer on Amazon referred to *A Deceitful Love* as, "a modern day West Side-Chicago story."

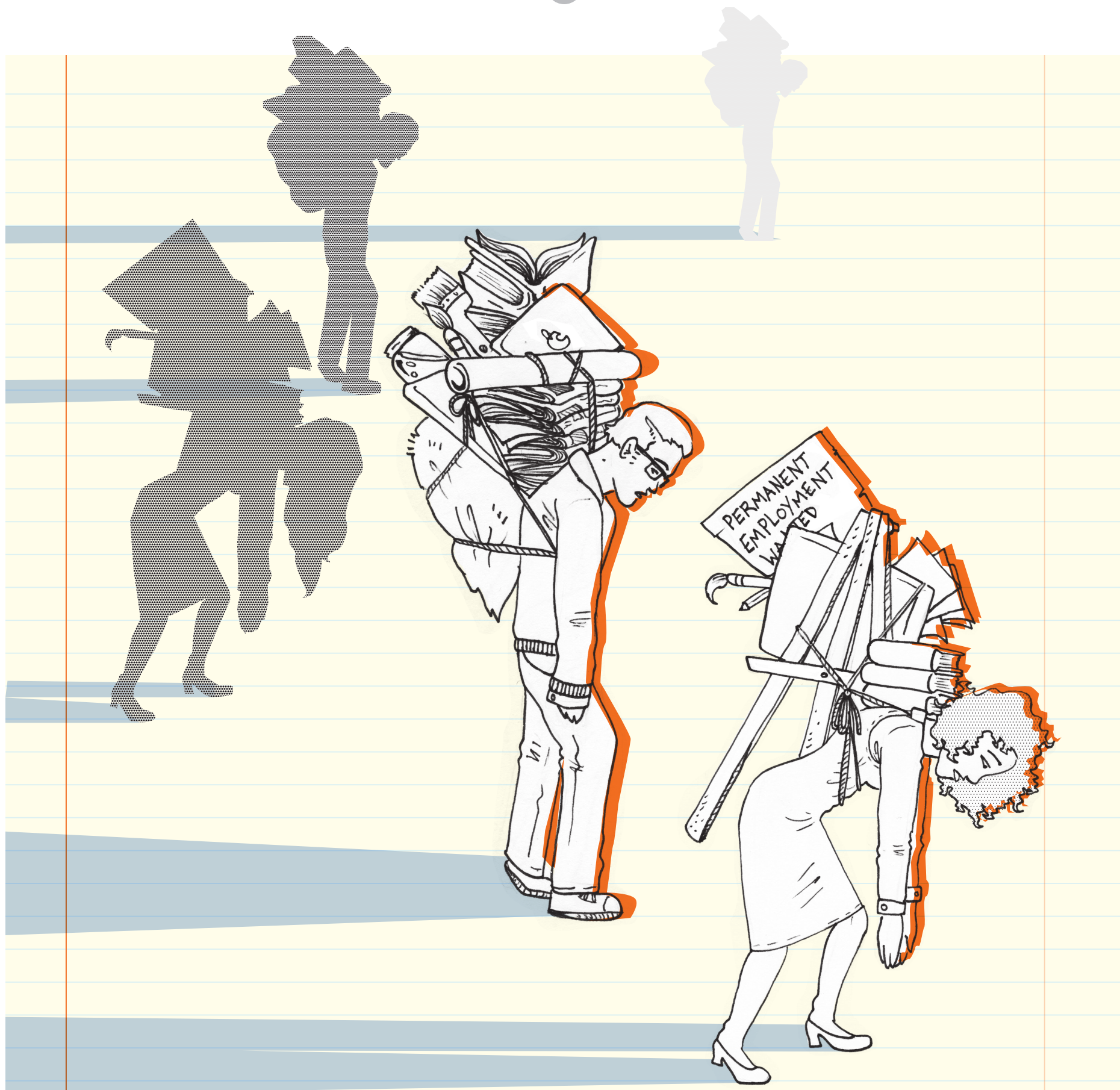
Her fans' excitement is matched by her own. Her publishing debut is a fulfillment of one of Crout's lifelong dreams. "Writing's definitely something I love. I've been doing it since I was twelve."

Not many people can say they have achieved their elementary school dreams, but for Crout that is just the beginning. "This time next year, hopefully I'll be dropping my tenth book, as well." If her recent success is any indication, it seems unlikely she will encounter any "opps" to her ambitions.



Rosie Accola is a 1st year writing student but she will also respond to the term "authoress."

book cover image courtesy of Mz. Lady Presents



Adjunctivitis

Relying On Part-time Faculty

► Megan Byrne

The Economics of Professorship

When college enrollment and tuition are at all time highs, how could professors sometimes be paid less than grocery store workers, forcing them to take jobs teaching at more than one university? This is an unfortunate reality of part-time professorship in the United States. According to the American Association of University Professors, the average salary for a part-time faculty member teaching a three-credit course is \$2,700. So to do some simple math, an ideal adjunct professor (another way of saying a part-time professor,) would teach four classes per semester putting their annual income at about \$21,600.

Ian Weaver, a former part-time unranked instructor at SAIC whose work is currently on display at the Chicago Cultural Center said, "The myth of 'flexibility' as an adjunct is just that: most of my graduate friends who are still adjuncting are all over the place, literally traveling from institution to institution. It is draining. It never really leaves you time to make your work." He now teaches full-time at Saint Mary's College in Indiana where he has "time, space, financial security, and health benefits, which makes creating work much easier. It is a sustainable way of life; adjuncting really isn't."

This explains why you see articles written about part-time faculty on food stamps, so entrenched in poverty that there seems to be no way to balance teaching and making a living wage. The Campaign for the Future of Higher Education reported that

contingent faculty, or faculty off the tenure track, are sometimes hired two or three weeks in advance for a course they will teach, leaving little time to plan and forcing faculty to spend far more time on the class than they are paid for. This then cuts into time for their own research or ability to hold another job, and, of course, the amount of time they can spend on class preparation.

In 1970, part-time faculty represented 22 percent of all teaching faculty. In a survey taken in 2011 by the National Center for Education Statistics part-time faculty represented 50 percent of that population. This means that half of professors, who now work part time, do not have the same benefits as their tenured colleagues. Part-time teaching increasingly poses a threat to all faculty's academic freedom, faculty-voice (the ability for part-time faculty to have power or be listened to by an administration), job-security, benefits like health insurance and pensions, and even allotted time for research grants — not to mention to the quality of students' educations. All of this while college tuition has risen 439 percent from 1982 to 2007.

There is no doubt that approaching the university as just another business is a compelling notion for administrators. But the idea of part-time faculty as expendable employees whose hours and classes can be cut and whose benefits can be denied seems strange coming from an academic institution. This mindset only makes sense if we think of institutions of higher learning as if they were for-profit ventures.

What SAIC Is Doing Right

At SAIC, part-time professors are divided into two groups. Adjunct faculty (adjuncts professors, adjunct associates, and adjunct assistants) who are part-time but are eligible to receive benefits and contracts. Lecturers are unranked, receive no benefits, and do not receive contracts. The difference between the two groups is that on adjunct professors teach more classes, and as well have contracts and benefits. In response to the concerns of the small, attentive community of teachers and administrators at SAIC, the administration recently announced a new report titled *Part-Time Faculty New Initiatives* that would further their vision for what the SAIC administration should do for it's faculty. The report calls for greater compensation and stability, professional development, and shared governance for part-time faculty.

The per-course rate is slated to rise approximately \$1,000 in each part-time category by the 2018-2019 school year. Part-time teachers will also be compensated with a course cancellation fee of \$500, which is intended only to compensate those lecturers for time spent planning for their courses, not for the courses themselves.

The report lists a Merit Review Raise Program for lecturers who have personal and significant achievements; they can apply for higher per-course rates depending on their status at the school. The report also states that part-time faculty who act as substitute teachers, participate in admissions, or take on short term administrative responsibilities for the

school will have their current \$200 day-rate raised to \$250.

The advancement section of the report states that more than a third of full-time hires in the past five years have been adjunct faculty already familiar with the cultural climate at SAIC. Undergraduate Dean Tiffany Holmes told F Newsmagazine that former adjunct in the Art and Technology department Judd Morrissey had been promoted to a full-time faculty position in 2014. The report mentions more promotions and job growth in the coming years.

Perhaps the most impressive of the new initiatives is that unranked part-time faculty and adjunct assistant professors “may be eligible for written contracts for terms of two years. Adjunct associate and adjunct full professors may be eligible for written contracts for terms of two or three years.” This as well as providing adjunct professors with benefits make SAIC's faculty employment policies progressive. Other opportunities for development include a new elected position, the Chair of Faculty, who will be responsible for “ongoing development of all faculty.”

The report does a lot for the morale of part-time faculty at SAIC and signals that the administration wants to hear their concerns.

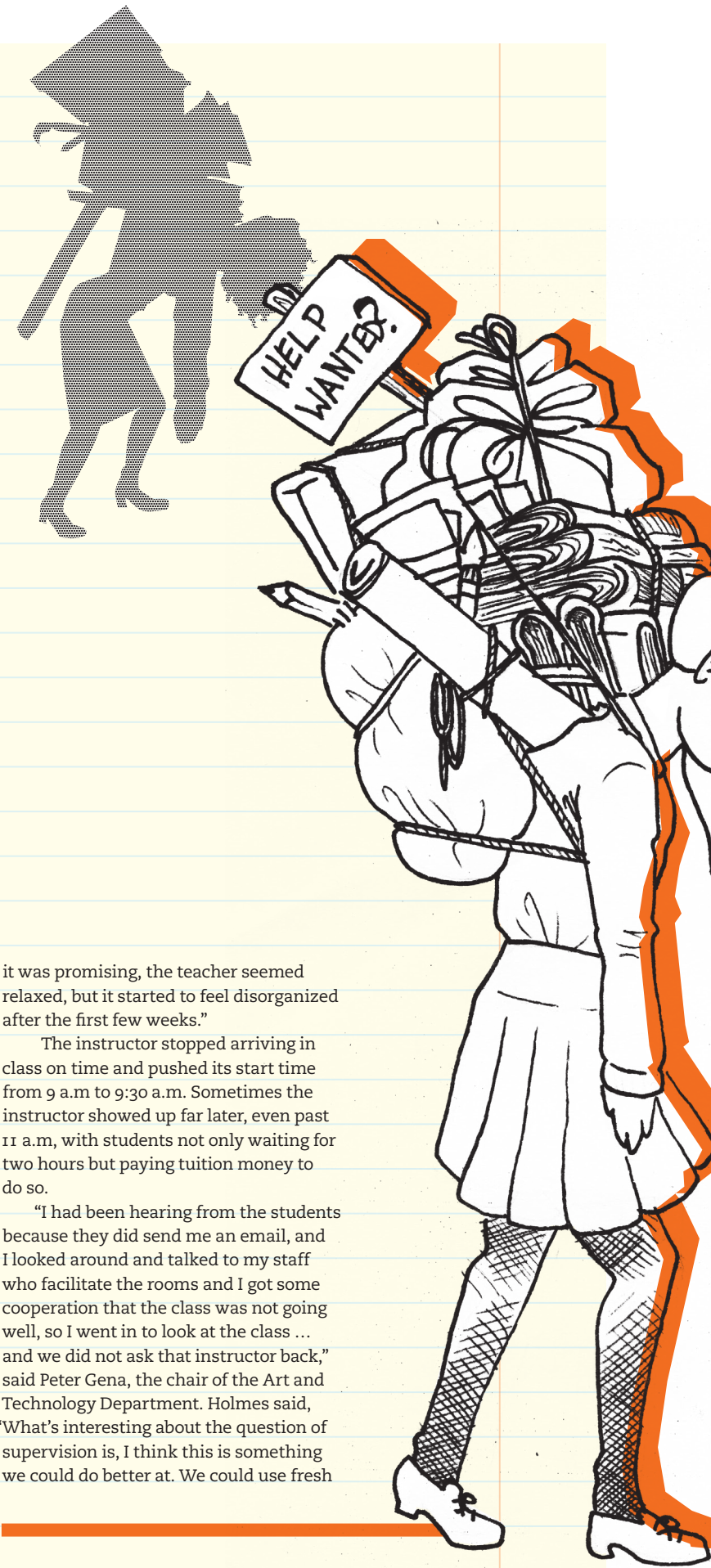
Why Not Hire Full-Time Professors?

“Sometimes I think we are forgetting what we ask part-timers to do,” said Sonia Da Silva in her office in early February. She talked about how difficult it was to get her team, who are exclusively part-time unranked professors to meet up because of their conflicting schedules. She and her team found a way around the challenging and inescapable nature of the contingent faculty schedule while maintaining a focus on their students education. “We made a wikipage, so that we can talk about the students and see what we need to do for them,” Da Silva and her department are only one example of the incredible part-time faculty at SAIC. In fact, SAIC awards one part-time faculty member a year with an outstanding achievement award, nominated by students. Some of the past recipients of the award, who are part-time, include Irena Knezevic and Trevor Martin.

SAIC's strengths point to a strong business acumen and effective administration, but there is a disconnect between a sort of efficacy in the school addressing administrative issues related to part-time professorship and its lack of attention to the effects these issues have on the sustainability of part-time faculty, students, and overall scholarship at the institution.

Supervision is just one of the curious things that have problems at a school which holds such precision when it comes to administrative issues. One example is the case of an undergraduate course in the Art and Technology department. The course, called Fabricating Promotion, focused on using different types of motors, and studying anything involving movement.

“The syllabus was very open to final pieces as long as they incorporated movement,” one student said. “At the beginning



it was promising, the teacher seemed relaxed, but it started to feel disorganized after the first few weeks.”

The instructor stopped arriving in class on time and pushed its start time from 9 a.m to 9:30 a.m. Sometimes the instructor showed up far later, even past 11 a.m, with students not only waiting for two hours but paying tuition money to do so.

“I had been hearing from the students because they did send me an email, and I looked around and talked to my staff who facilitate the rooms and I got some cooperation that the class was not going well, so I went in to look at the class ... and we did not ask that instructor back,” said Peter Gena, the chair of the Art and Technology Department. Holmes said, “What’s interesting about the question of supervision is, I think this is something we could do better at. We could use fresh

“70% of courses taught are taught by part-time faculty, and that has to change.” — Lisa Wainwright, Dean of Faculty

eyes or a new perspective.” A new perspective seems sorely needed.

Two confirmed students e-mailed Gena about the course asking for solutions to the course. In the context of school policies, they were provided with two options: to take the credit, or to be refunded tuition for the course and receive a ‘W’ for withdrawal on their transcript. In this absurd dilemma these students can either accept the refund they deserve with an unwarranted blemish on their academic transcripts or quietly accept credit for a course where the skills and

knowledge promised were not provided. This reflects an understanding of course credits as a marker of monetary value rather than academic growth, and the broader implications of such business-oriented thinking are seen in the school's handling of part-time professorship.

"I'm not happy with it. 70% of courses taught are taught by part-time faculty, and that has to change," commented Lisa Wainwright, Dean of Faculty at SAIC. Of those part-time professors, 164 are adjunct professors, or ranked professors, and 451 are unranked part-time faculty, or Lecturers. For as long as the faculty members interviewed by F Newsmagazine for this article can remember, they have understood Wainwright's was to have 50% of courses to be taught by full-time faculty. "It's very challenging in terms of budget," she said, "because to have new full-time positions is a big hit to the budget." While the cost of full-time positions is indisputably higher than the cost of part-time positions, whether the money simply isn't there seems up for question.

When discussing a school whose business acumen is so finely tuned that late-fees at its media center are charged by the minute; that a substantial number of its students are not U.S. residents and ineligible for financial aid; that one three-credit course costs \$4,314; it seems incredible that the obstacle to the growth of full-time faculty would be cost.

The overreliance on part-time faculty affects SAIC students, as well. What reverberates through the interviews F Newsmagazine conducted with multiple professors was that alongside the countless incredible part-time faculty members at SAIC was that "there seems to be a good deal of instructors hired to teach courses for which they don't have sufficient pedagogical training," said an Adjunct Professor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Where this seems to be particularly felt is in the First Year Seminar courses, which are supposed to act as an introduction to composition through an array of courses ranging from Marx to Fight Club. The problem with hiring lecturers for First Year Seminar classes, and perhaps the reason undergraduates file numerous complaints on course evaluations about those lecturers each year is, according to Holmes, that "the teachers are often hired as Ph. D. candidates who may not be accustomed to teaching first year art and design students basic writing skills ... they don't have a lot of experience with composition and their heads are wrapped up in the dissertations. There's sometimes a bit of a miss ... because some syllabi are aimed at a much higher academic level." In this way, First Year Seminar is an oversight of what is supposed to be a sort of freshman composition course. Here, it is because freshmen are asked to write for example, an exegesis statement without ever really knowing what one is, they have to find help outside of the classroom.

They often find that help at the writing center, which is a graduate operated facility that helps undergraduate students understand academic assignments such as exegesis. In this way, the role of teaching what an exegesis actually is often falls

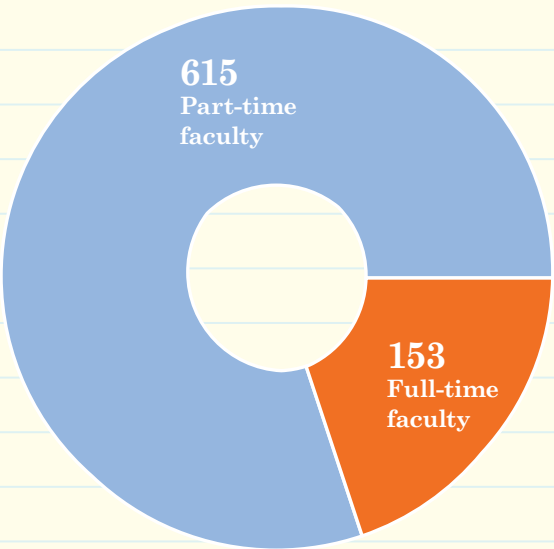
onto graduate students. Graduate students are hardly paid the same amount as the teacher who should have been facilitating this work in this first place, but was never mandated to. Even after considering the negative effects of this on the graduate student and the professor, one must consider the consequences this has for the students. Instead of learning composition in the three-hour lecture (which supposedly serves as an introduction to academic writing), the student is left to learn the fundamentals an exegesis — writing on their own, outside of class.

Addressing this problem is not as simple as hiring one incredible professor or chair—it requires the administration to address the problem of part-time faculty as a whole. It requires that idealism Wainwright is hoping for to manifest in the way that the school treats its part-time faculty, which for the most part, is far better than other U.S. universities.

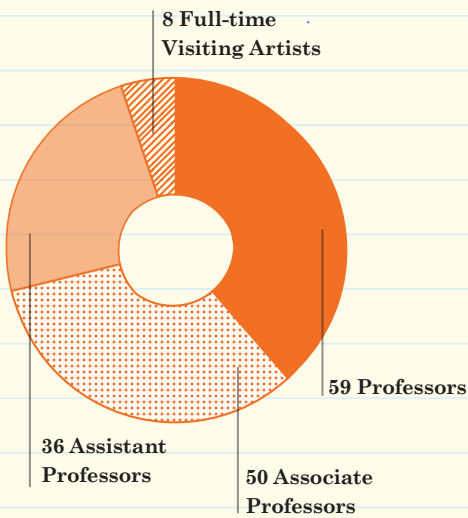
"I do consider adjunct faculty part of our core faculty. Do they need better pay and more opportunities? Yes, they do," Wainwright said, stressing that part-time faculty were part of the foundation that makes SAIC one of the best art institutes in the nation. Gena may have said it best: "I would put our faculty against any other faculty out there." Gena, here, is right. The part-time faculty at SAIC have been lauded with awards from artist communities nationally, as well as exhibiting outstanding praise from their own students.

So how, if everyone at SAIC is aware of the value of those who provide and facilitate the learning that makes SAIC and so many other schools so great, is there now room to cut superfluous spending, or redistributing money to reasonably compensate the faculty teaching the students? In the case of SAIC, how can the cost of tuition be so high, and not reasonably allow for granting more part-time faculty benefits and full-time positions?

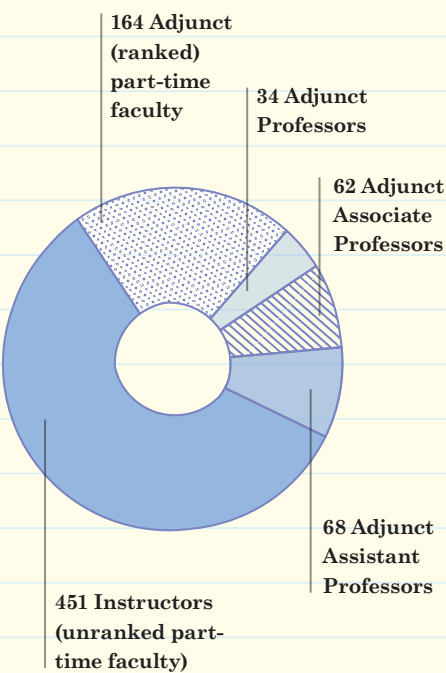
2013–2014 SAIC
Degree Program Faculty



Full-Time Faculty



Part-Time Faculty



Megan Byrne is an undergraduate in the BFAW department. She is featured in this article if you look closely.



Bugarach 2012

Photos of an Unrealized Apocalypse

Yvette Monahan's *The Time of Dreaming the World Awake*

► Violet Callis

Irish artist Yvette Monahan spent a year photographing the landscape and locals of Bugarach, a mountain in Southern France rumored to be part of the Mayan Apocalypse, in the year leading up to the anticipated date of December 21, 2012. The mountain and its mysteries have inspired artists and writers from Jules Verne to Steven Spielberg, and have long featured in Holy Grail, UFO, and other esoteric conspiracy theories.

Monahan's photographs in the days leading up to the potential Armageddon capture this allure, presenting a place that appears timeless despite the project's very specific time frame. A mystical quality permeates her portraits of locals who live in unconventional ways on the mountain, in which the subjects sometimes seem to embody mythical archetypes.

Her work references its own romantic heritage, winking at the idea of the sublime. At the same time, it engages with the landscape on the hopeful level of a believer. The ambiguous presence of the mountain buzzes throughout the photos, informing them with both desire and trepidation. Our knowledge that nothing occurred on the 21st gives the photos a wistful undercurrent, the sense of the area as another unrealized Arcadia.

VC: Where did you first encounter the story of Bugarach, and what led you to photograph it in the year leading up to 12/21/12?

YM: I was doing a course in France in 2011, and staying with a friend. Her husband was driving us around when he began to tell me the story of this mountain, and that some people believed that the end of the world was about to occur. This was an idea that all of the people in my meditation group believed: That there was going to be this change of consciousness on that date. I found it a bit disconcerting. One day I was telling a friend about the story when we were having tea and I went, "Oh my god, I have to do something about this." And it was just one of those light bulb moments. I felt that I had to go to this place, and be there, and be around that story.

VC: There's a certain emotional charge behind the images. At the time, did you hope that this change of consciousness you mentioned would actually happen?

YM: I didn't know, but I decided I'd be open either way. Lots of people there were kind of talking gobbledygook at some stages, and there were varied opinions circulating. I decided that I would be open to either outcome. By the end, I kind of

wanted something to happen. You feel like Chicken Licken, "The sky is falling in," that it would be good for a change to happen, but nothing did [laughs]. Visually, it would have been great if frogs had fallen from the sky, or if there was a massive thunderstorm that broke open the mountain or something. There was a lot of media there. The mayor got the local gendarme to come in and police it, and to go in and out you needed a special permit. There were German TV crews and Japanese ones, and I think they just went and got drunk in the end. It was kind of jovial. The locals didn't want anything to do with the story, really.

VC: The photographs seem to maintain ambiguity about the outcome of the prophecies. Some images from the book, like a long row of caterpillars moving across the ground, could be found both beautiful and unsettling.

YM: I suppose that was the thing, you just weren't too sure whether it was a positive or a negative in the broadest sense of those terms. Or, I suppose, Arcadia versus Apocalypse. In terms of photography, you try to go for something that's visually arresting to actually photograph, and you're swept up in that. Then, in the edit, you come back to those questions again.

There was part of me that was half

terrified, because they were saying that they'd have the French Foreign Legion down to do the guard around Bugarach on the date, so that if anyone reacted they wouldn't have a problem shooting French people, because [the Foreign Legion] are not French. These are just rumors, adding to the tension of the place. You'd definitely get stopped late at night if you were driving around, and asked what you were doing and why you were there.

VC: Were you stopped while you were shooting there?

YM: Yeah, they would ask what you were doing, and I'd have to say I was on holiday with my auntie or something. Because there are a lot of people living alternatively, they might hassle them a little bit. There's a big hippie market on a Sunday where people would get together, and that's where you'd hear the gossip.

VC: How did you engage with the off-the-grid nature of the locals' lifestyles in the photographs?

YM: Some people are into living alternatively, or just with minimum interaction with money and electricity and things like that. So they live in yurts or teepees. One man I photographed lived in a cave, and he just seemed to live off things that he found. There are hot water sources in the area, so they bathe in those instead of having running water. And there are people who just live very normal lives. There was a great mix of people, and I suppose that was a problem with photographing it. I didn't want it to be about living alternatively, that wasn't what I was trying to get at. I was more interested in kind of feeling about change, and the possibility of change. The alternative community would have been easier to photograph.

VC: It's more tangible.

YM: Yeah, and people were quite wary about being photographed for the project, as well.

VC: How did you make people feel comfortable being photographed? One portrait in particular that stood out to me was the man standing in the forest with a pair of horns, dressed as Pan.

YM: Yeah, Pan. Well, he busked as Pan at the market, and dressed up and sang and played the flute. He was speaking English, and I was so tired of speaking French that day that I just went up to him and said, 'Hi, I need someone to talk to!' We became friends, and I went up to visit him. He wanted to get some water from the river, so we went down and did that, and then he wanted to get some pictures for his mother of his new Pan outfit, because she used to help him out with his outfits. So we did some pictures. He had had a difficult time, he went to a very expensive boarding school in England, and he had had some problems there. He was living in the woods in this friend's summer house, but it was a little hut just in the middle of the forest. He was staying there to try and work through his issues. I felt for him, you know, he's a very sensitive guy.

With other people I'd be staying in the same place, on a farm where there were a few people, and just get chatting. I'd try and organize and meet people that I thought were interesting. So I was knocking around, making friends. I'd swim in the river everyday, so then you get really comfortable, being in the same water as people. They see you swimming and you see them, and we might have casual exchanges. Gradually, they'd see you with the camera, and then the next time you picked it up they'd not really react to it and just be really relaxed.

Afterwards I would take their details and send them prints. I photographed a lot of people that aren't in the final project.

VC: How did you decide on the 22 photos of the final project?

YM: Twenty-two is a sacred number in the area, so I decided to go with that number of pictures. I wanted to work a lot of those things about the area into the way the book was made so that it was integral rather than explicit. The number is just there, nobody really notices it. It becomes part of the narrative, but in a really non-explicit way.

VC: Some of the photos reference Caspar David Friedrich and the Rückenfigur, the image of a human figure gazing upon the sublime landscape. How do you relate to a Romantic tradition in the work?

YM: I suppose the reason I came to love Caspar David Friedrich was really through Clare Richardson's photography. There's a darkness to her work, so it's not just Romanticism in a traditional sense. I suppose my aim was to try and balance that out with some things that were more ambiguous, so that the whole thing didn't lead to some kind of romantic view. It was definitely a challenge, because I do think it's nice to be drawn in by color or lovely sort of beautiful things. You react to beauty. Rückenfigur was in and out of my head the whole time and eventually I left it in, because I felt like it was just a viewpoint. It's definitely something to question all the time.

VC: Were you inspired by other artists and writers who've made work surrounding the mountain?

YM: Yeah. Steven Spielberg [laughs]. At the time, I felt everyone I was drawn to had spent time at that area. I thought everything in the world pointed back at the area. I just had such an obsession with that place that everything seemed to have a connection to either the Cathars or the sacred bloodline story. I mean, with most of this stuff you can take it or leave it, but that's why I'm interested in myths and stories. They come out in this way that's not history, but then, what is history? All of this stuff. Because I had no other way to kind of connect things, I'd try to just follow any little link I saw and go with chance and coincidences as part of it.

VC: Does knowing what happened on the 21st change how you view the work, as opposed to when you were taking the photos?

YM: I stopped on the 21st of December, so that I wouldn't be influenced by the outcome. It was really about the build up. Nothing had been realized, in one sense. But I think, in retrospect, what I found was that maybe I had totally changed from doing the project. In a sense it was more a personal experience than anything. It gave me an excuse to look at things that were of interest to me, and to go right into them. And I had some very bizarre experiences there. Good ones, but strange. I think I was really changed after them.

I went back to the area in the summer, to give some of the people the book. I found I just didn't feel the same tension in the place. Maybe that was just me. Even though people were talking the talk, I just didn't take it on board anymore, because there wasn't the same overhanging prophecy. I felt like I couldn't take any pictures there anymore. It just didn't mean as much, and it didn't have the same tension in it.



Violet Callis studies poetry at SAIC. She may have seen a UFO last week in Western Ireland



Pan 2012



Montsegur 2012



The Presbytery 2012



The Labyrinth of Nebias 2012

CONCRETE MEMORIES

Doris Salcedo's exhibition underscores forced disappearance and political oppression victims

► Alison Reilly

Doris Salcedo's work rewards the patient observer. Her sculptures, which utilize domestic objects including doors, tables, bed frames, cabinets and chairs, trace the lives of victims of political violence. Salcedo, who lives and works in Bogotá, Columbia, insists that every piece she creates begins with the testimonials of political prisoners.

The installation of Salcedo's work at the MCA serves as a kind of poetry itself. The retrospective, curated by Julie Rodrigues Widholm and MCA Director Madeleine Grynsztejn, is elegant and provocative, and its organization creates a clear trajectory for the visitor. The exhibition opens on the lobby of the fourth floor with *Plegaria Muda* (Silent Prayer), a meditative maze of tables, each approximately the size of an average coffin. One table stands upright, while another is inverted on top of it with a layer of dirt in between the two. Small pinholes in the inverted table allow for sprouts of grass to break through the solid layer of wood. The pairs of tables, which Salcedo created after months of research about gang violence in Los Angeles, overwhelm the space.

In *Plegaria Muda*, even Salcedo's use of dirt, a potentially unwieldy material, is thoroughly calculated. The artist acknowledges her perfectionist tendencies, as she states, "I don't improvise anything. I'm unable to." Salcedo's calculating quality restrains the piece, because it communicates artificiality (there is no smell of dirt despite the rows and rows of tables), but her desire for precision creates a deeply contemplative space throughout each gallery of the exhibition.

In *Casa Viuda IV*, Salcedo inlays a bone fragment within the receding panels of a wooden door, and above the fragment, in another panel, she preserves a delicate white shirt. The bone and the shirt fuse with the wood, memorializing their forms. In this sculpture, Salcedo merges architectural elements of the home as well. A wooden bed frame and layers of distressed doors are woven together, now permanently attached. Despite their outward signs of deterioration, these objects convey a sense of permanence. This sculpture attaches itself to the wall and visitors must walk between the two pieces of the bed frame to move into the next gallery. These sculptural forms were based on Salcedo's interviews with rural Colombian women, who were forced to leave their homes out of fear for their personal safety.

Her other series follow a similar format – plaster, clothing, human hair, steel, rubber, wax, cement and animal

fiber fuse together to create new bodies. Salcedo activates each room with a new series of work. Disremembered features three shirts woven out of raw silk and thousands of needles. The transparent sculptures are the only objects in the room. They hang loosely on the walls, at once evoking the presence and absence of bodies.

In contrast, sculptures made from domestic furniture that Salcedo has filled with concrete are arranged in groups in the largest room in the exhibition. Rough steel edges protrude from the discolored blocks of concrete and cracks appear in the large spaces that fill the shelves of armoires and dressers. Even in their roughness, these sculptures retain a certain fragility. Floral patterns and textures from shirts encased in the sculptures emerge from within the concrete. The rawness of her materials and found objects continually contrasts with the meticulousness apparent in her work.

At first glance, *Atrabiliarios* appears to be an installation of faded images around the walls, accompanied by stacks of translucent empty boxes, organized in small stacks in one corner of the room. However, the images are, in fact, shoes worn by victims of violence. Salcedo has carved out small cubes in the wall for each individual. The openings are covered by animal fiber, which serves as a layer of skin preserving the shoes. Together, these icons transform the room to a site of memorial.

Each gallery on the upper floor of the MCA presents a different body of Salcedo's work, along with an alcove for visitors to watch a short film that highlights her public works. Salcedo was unable to complete a public installation in Chicago because of a lack of funding and community support. The installation was intended to use water droplets to spell out the names of children who had died from gun violence in Chicago. Salcedo hoped that it would be installed on the former site of Cabrini-Green, the public housing project on the Near North Side of Chicago that was destroyed in 2011, but the project has yet to be realized. The video of her public works plays an important role in the exhibition: "What you see in the survey is not even half of who I am as an artist. The public art pieces are a truly important part of who I am." The video, produced by the MCA, is also available online via a microsite for the exhibition. Despite the difficulties in navigating the microsite and its occasional technical glitches, it provides a comprehensive overview of the exhibition, referencing all of Salcedo's work in detail.

In addition to the testimonials, "Po-

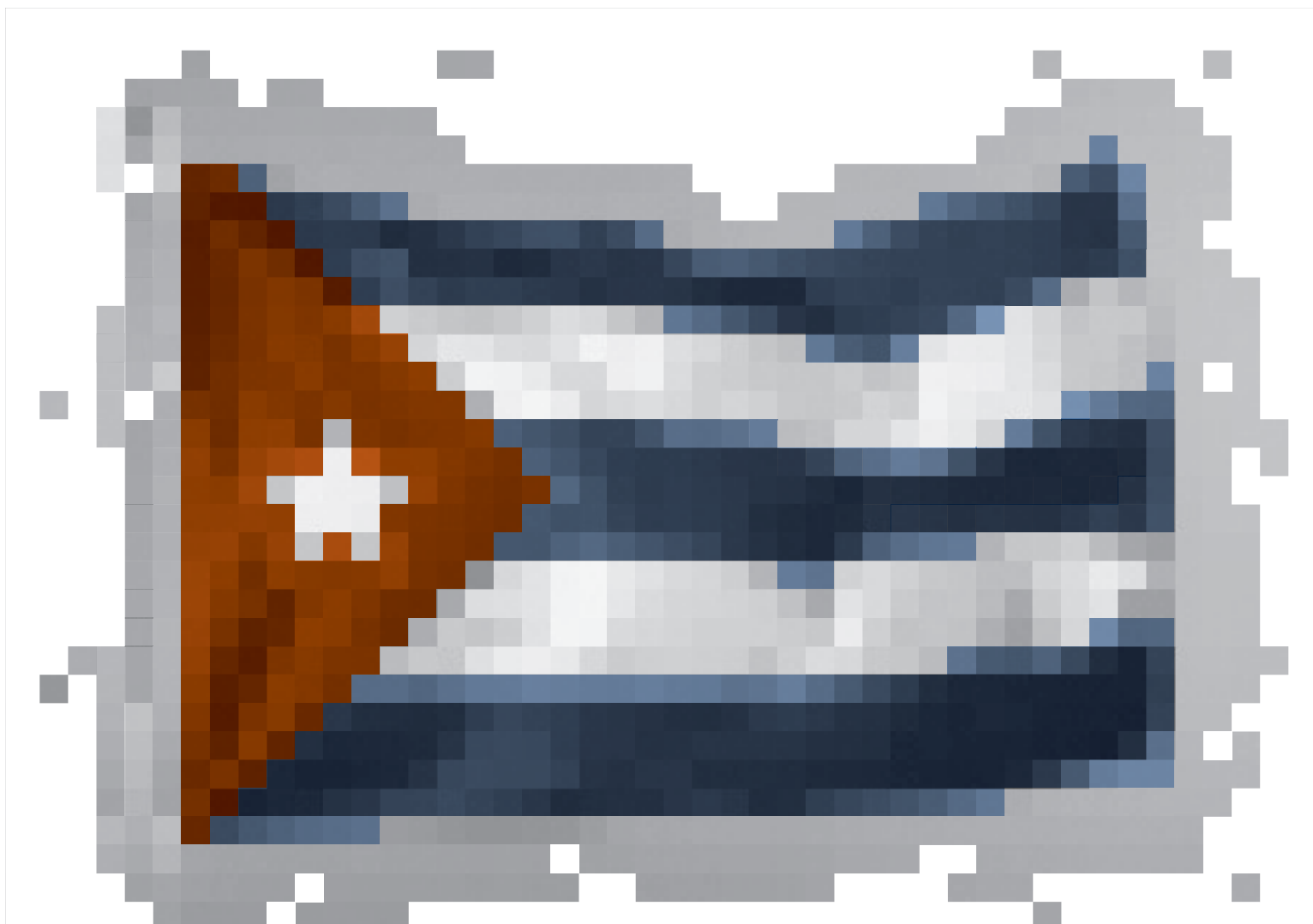


etry," as she describes it, "is an essential element in art. Without poetry, there is no art. Every piece is accompanied by the reading of specific poetry or specific philosophy."

Salcedo says, "The experience of an individual is always my point of departure," but her works presented at the MCA remain anonymous, and despite her discussion of the importance of poetry in reference to her art, the only wall text in the exhibition appears in the first gallery. This curatorial decision, however, proves exemplary as Salcedo's works speak strongly for themselves. The exhibition is the first retrospective of Salcedo's in the United States and will be on view at the MCA until May 24th. The exhibition will then travel to the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Pérez Art Museum Miami.

○

Alison Reilly is a graduate student in Art History. She is currently writing her master's thesis, which examines bunkerization in Albania through its representation in film.



The Artist Is Not Present

~~The Artist Is Not Present~~

► Zeenat Nagree

For three weeks this February, Alejandro Figueredo Diaz-Perera lived inside a narrow enclosure at the Chicago Artists' Coalition (CAC). Makeshift walls that didn't quite reach the ceiling separated the artist from the visitors, who could not observe the performance. The walls in the room were used to display two other artworks, comprising a compact solo presentation titled *In the Absence of a Body*, part of the CAC's year-long Bolt Residency. The description of this setup makes it seem as if there was no way of knowing if Diaz-Perera was actually behind the walls. But, occasional sounds — a cough here, a rustle there — gave his presence away. In the absence of any other evidence of the artist, these signs of life were unexpected interruptions. They weren't quite ghostly (we were told, of course, that Diaz-Perera was behind the walls), but they were disconcerting, palpable confirmations of his presence.

To understand the 23-year-old artist's self-imposed vow of silence and disappearance, we must turn to biography. Diaz-Perera is from Cuba. He came to the U.S. less than a year ago to exhibit his work and has decided not to return. These political circumstances turn the performance into a comment on censorship. But this criticism is reserved not only for his country of origin. In his artist's statement, Diaz-Perera highlights the fears that stem from his current exile in the U.S. "Because of my legal status — my unlawful absence, my unlawful presence — I must remain quiet while living here," he writes. The performance is thus an enactment of a doubling of the condition of being deprived of agency, and his silence is an exploration of censorship as an enforced state and a method of survival.

For three weeks, Diaz-Perera decided not to talk, read, or write. He didn't leave his tiny living space, except once a day around midnight to use the bathroom,

when no one was usually at the gallery. His only possessions were a mat, a pillow, a blanket, a lamp, a hammer and a rudimentary cellphone for emergencies. Periodically, his collaborator and girlfriend, artist and curator Cara Megan Lewis, passed food and water through the opening of a vent. Apart from this daily ritual, Diaz-Perera had no contact with the outside world. These restrictions, while frighteningly isolating, are hardly among the worst that performance artists have put themselves through. Take Tehching Hsieh as an example — the Taiwanese-born exile in New York spent a year in a cage between 1978 and 1979. In contrast, Diaz-Perera's goal was not to mark time or test the limits of his endurance. Almost an inversion of Marina Abramovic's *The Artist Is Present* (2010), Diaz-Perera's configuration made the viewer feel his presence through the traces that defy the totality of absence and silence.

On a few occasions, visitors slipped notes through the vents, Diaz-Perera recounted in an interview. Many others knocked or called out. Diaz-Perera refrained from responding. The lack of communication between the artist and the audience echoes the historical absence of dialogue between Cuba and the U.S. as well as the struggle that Cubans face trying to keep in touch with those across the shore. Diaz-Perera has experienced this predicament over and over as a child trying to talk to his father living in the U.S., as a Havana-based Cuban artist attempting to contact his collaborator and girlfriend in Chicago, and as an exile exchanging news with his family in Cuba. Incidentally, communication was also the primary preoccupation of the recently concluded *Cuban Virtualities*, an exhibition of new media art from Cuba at the Sullivan Galleries at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Diaz-Perera's concern with encompassing the experience of being on both sides extended to the two-channel audio

installation at the CAC entitled *Dissonance*. One half featured Cuban-born artist Tania Bruguera's conversation with her sister, after Tania was arrested in Havana this January for trying to stage a participatory performance that details the injustices she was facing. The other half had Assata Shakur, an American member of the Black Liberation Army who sought political asylum in Cuba in 1984, expressing her fear of persecution by the U.S. Both had entirely different convictions and interpretations regarding freedom of expression in the two countries.

Dissonance underscored the power of speech and the necessity and risks of expressing opinions that go against the established order. Even as Bruguera and Shakur's words looped again and again, an inverted microphone chipped away at the corner of the makeshift walls concealing Diaz-Perera. The sound amplification device was connected to a motor that made it bang against the wall. The noise of this impact was magnified, although its outcome was relatively unnoticeable. This installation, titled *The Silence (...) is Overrated*, was nowhere close to breaking the barrier between the artist and the audience, owing to the minuscule scale of its effect. It created instead a repeated gesture of resistance, offering the promise that someday somehow the wall would come crashing down.

Alejandro Figueredo Diaz-Perera and Cara Megan Lewis, together known as the collaborative Diaz Lewis, will perform at *Aspect/Ratio* on April 10 at 6 p.m.



Zeenat Nagree is a first-year graduate student in Art History at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has written for *Time Out Mumbai*, *Art India* and *Artforum*.

“

Because of my legal status — my unlawful absence, my unlawful presence — I must remain quiet while living here.

”



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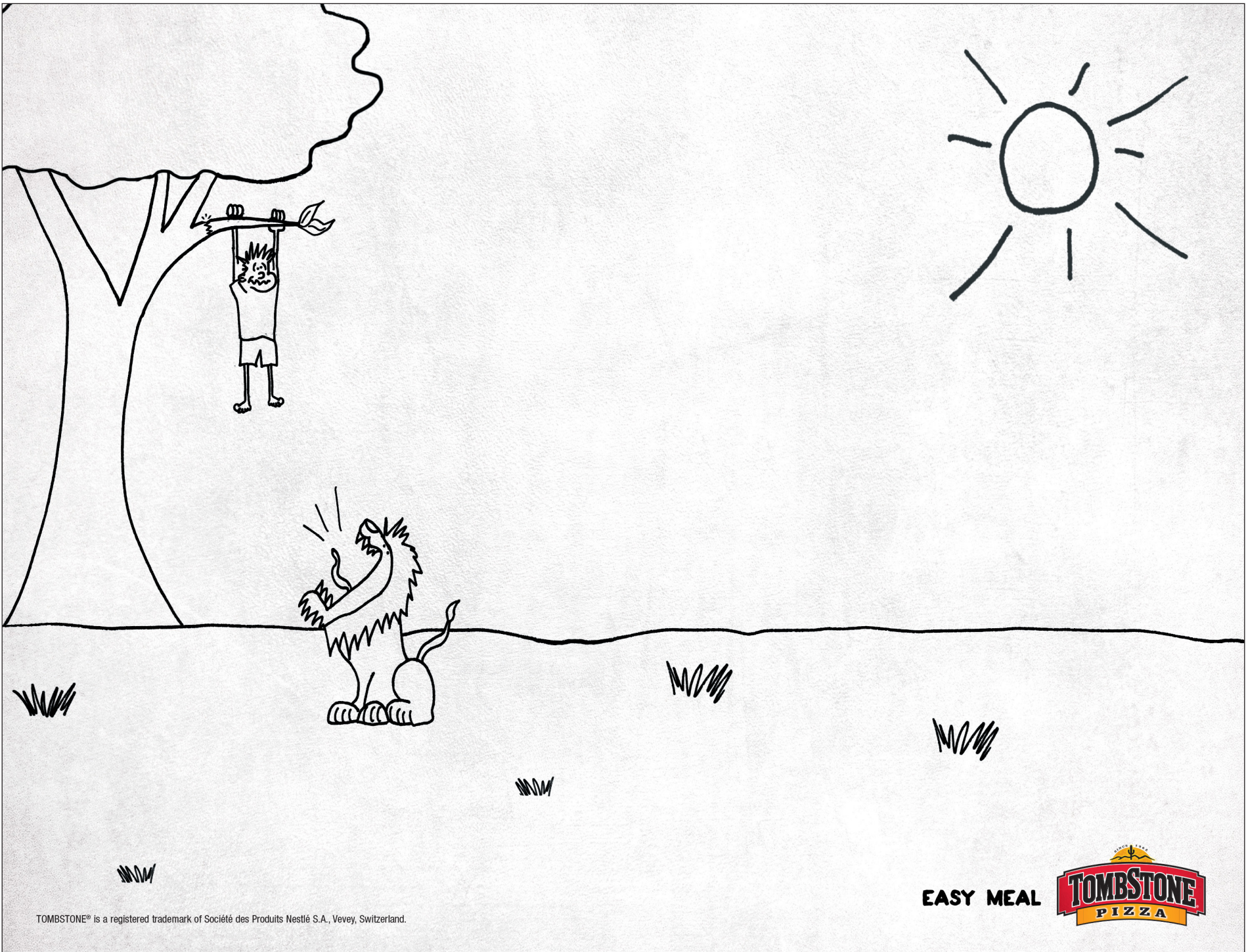
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A Sublime Catharsis

Field of Dogs Brings Dante to the Screen

► Weronika Malek

The 18th Annual European Union Film Festival at the Gene Siskel Center is an excellent opportunity to see films that often have not premiered in the U.S. yet. *Field of Dogs* (2014) by Lech Majewski, one of the only two Polish films represented, was shown in the festival's second week. Influenced by memorable events that took place in Poland in 2010 — the crash of the presidential plane in Smolensk, to name just one — Majewski's film draws its main inspiration from Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Field of Dogs is a part of Majewski's movie triptych; a cinematographic composition that seeks to create a dialogue with philosophically significant pieces of art. Earlier parts of the triptych, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (2004) and *The Mill and the Cross* (2011), were inspired by, respectively, Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* and Bruegel's *The Procession to Calvary*. Painting is also a significant motif in *Field of Dogs*: The protagonist interacts with the symbolist paintings of Jacek Malczewski and studies Gustave Doré's illustrations for Dante's *Inferno*. Visual arts and Dante's poetry are seemingly the only things that the protagonist is able to connect to. *The Divine Comedy* provides him consolation and understanding that he cannot find in human interactions.

Lech Majewski has a personal relationship with painting himself: Before graduating from the National Film School in Lodz, he studied visual arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. He is also famous for having absolute control over his movies: He is a writer, director, cinematographer, editor and composer for all of his projects. The perfectionism of this renaissance man results in a unity of score, cinematography and plot. Majewski's painting education and admiration for Old Masters' art is visible in his painterly cinematography. Every scene is carefully planned to be aesthetically appealing. Even if the philosophical and somewhat depressing storyline of *Field of Dogs* sometimes overwhelms the viewer, the cinematography is a constant visual feast.

The aesthetic pleasure of the movie contrasts with its melancholic plot. The never-named protagonist is a young man whose indifferent facial expression resembles Dante's serious post-mortem profile. He is a specialist in 19th century poetry, but works as a cashier in a supermarket. We learn that his life has been stagnating since the tragic accident in which he had lost his best friend and his beloved Basia. The mourning protagonist is indifferent to reality, finding solace only in the world of dreams. The only sense of

his existence seems to be a desire to sleep. It is suggested that the protagonist's dreams are unconventional, allowing him to transcend to another realm.

Throughout the movie, the line between dreams and reality becomes blurred. We also learn that the protagonist almost lost sight in the accident. Blindness (in his case, temporary) in literature is often associated with prophetic abilities. That motif originated from the mythological Greek figure of Tiresias, a prophet who was punished by the gods with blindness but comforted with the gift of foreseeing the future. The protagonist in *Field of Dogs* seems to have a better understanding of the evil in the world thanks to his visionary abilities.

The hero's personal tragedy intermingles with disasters concerning the whole society. He is often seen watching the news: the flood in Southern Poland, the eruption of the volcano in Iceland, or the death of the Polish President in the plane catastrophe of Smolensk. Within a few months in 2010, so many tragic events had happened in Poland and Europe that some people indeed thought that "the end of the world" was coming.

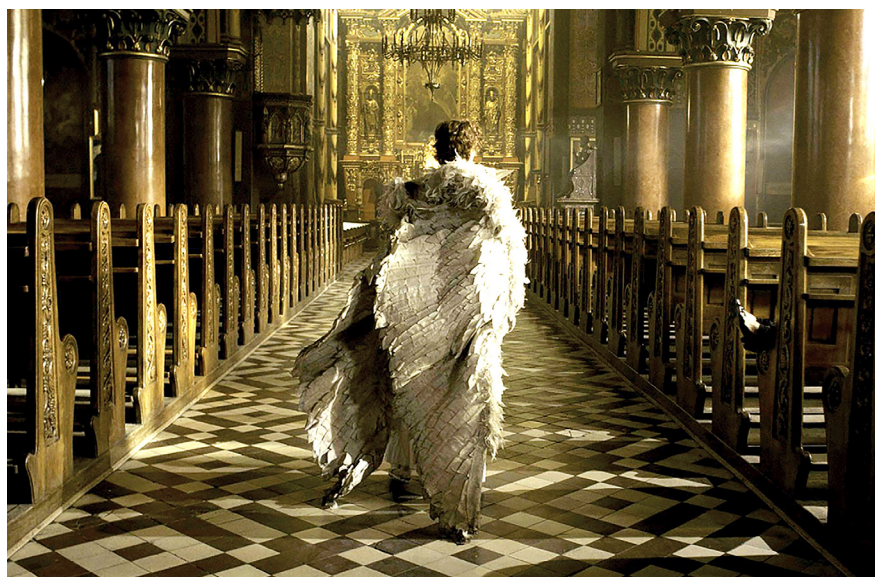
Majewski creates a disturbing atmosphere in his movie in order to reflect on Dante's *Inferno*. In the *Divine Comedy* the narrator takes a mystical journey through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. For the protagonist of *Field of Dogs*, the earthly existence is Hell. The dreams, in which he confronts the ghosts of his criticizing father and ironic best friend, are his purgatory. Finally, they allow him to transcend to a paradise-like state of mind, in which he is united with his beloved.

Despite being written in the 14th century, *The Divine Comedy* is still relevant to 21st century readers. In *Field of Dogs*, Dante's poem is reflected in the life of a contemporary man embedded in a contemporary context of international anxiety.

Field of Dogs is comparable to *The Divine Comedy*. Majewski argues for the power of art, whether it be literature, painting, or film, to free society from fear and allow humankind to transcend from a hellish market culture to the paradise realm of freedom and beauty.



Weronika Malek is a sophomore, focusing on painting and art criticism. "Purgatory" is her favorite canto of Dante's "Divine Comedy".





In Defense of Kanye

Is Racial Bias Behind the Honorary Degree Uproar?

► Henry Harris

Kanye West will be getting an honorary doctorate from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). The announcement was made on March 17, with serious rumors circulating for two weeks prior. Even before the news was made official, a significant portion of the student body reacted critically to the idea of West receiving a diploma. The central concern that students have taken up is that our degrees would become less valuable.

It is rare for SAIC students to be upset en masse. The very idea of West receiving a doctorate — primarily substantiated by mere rumor — brought a noticeable response that countered this pattern. Many students disapproved; many also celebrated. Some didn't care. Overnight, it became a hot issue on campus, polarizing at the outset. With it, questions were raised: What is an honorary doctorate? How are recipients selected? These inquiries tend to casually arise only on graduation day when the handful of awards are distributed, hands shaken. The brief award ceremony takes no more than ten minutes. Most forget about the curious honorary doctorate as quickly as the commencement program is thrown into the trash or glued to the pages of a scrapbook. Now suddenly, we want to know more.

These degrees mean nothing in and of themselves; rather, they are ascribed with symbolic value. Honorary doctorates are given out to recognize achievement amongst makers and doers that aren't always tied to our school or immediate art communities. The degree creates a kind of tie that says, "We see you, keep it up." The gesture of giving the diploma is more important than the piece of paper itself. It is not a degree but a statement.

Kanye West is a doer and a maker mostly recognized as a musician and video artist. His talent does not need to be proved here; the amount of cultural impact made by West is inarguably immense. It is likely that his work will have the staying power of Patti Smith, who also received an honorary doctorate from

SAIC in 2011. There are many differences between Patti Smith and Kanye West, including their age, gender, style of music, and the fact that one of them dated Robert Mapplethorpe. The difference I wish to point out here is that Kanye West is black and Patti Smith is white. The notable amount of criticism West's pending honorary doctorate has received is covertly racist. This has not been the dominant view, but it is worth addressing. I'm sure no one has said West doesn't deserve the certificate because of his skin color, but the prevalent attitudes about him are grounded in a more complex presence of racism.

Arthur Chu has written on the perception of West's accomplishments, claiming that his work ethic is often misinterpreted. West has been criticized as having an overwhelmingly large ego. This judgment, according to Chu, is fueled by a kind of intolerance amongst whites toward things like self-promotion and perfectionism in people of color. These are things more readily available to whites, especially men. For majorities, we call aspirations "goals." For minorities, we call them "ambitions." Chu goes on to point out the difference between "tangible" (quantitative, statistical) and "intangible" (qualitative, "being oneself") accomplishments. He says that people of color must work to obtain tangibles and rely on them more than a white person who has the freedom to fall back on intangibles. It is by this token that I claim that the negative reactions are covertly racist. We too easily make an ostensibly moral criticism about Kanye that is really grounded in a kind of white discomfort about race, or as Robin DiAngelo calls it, "white fragility."

Achievement is an interesting concept at our school. For undergraduates, SAIC does not have a grading scale or even use a pass/fail system; we use credit (CR) or no credit (NCR). Many of us may well recall gleefully explaining this system to our families, our university friends, or our loan officers. Our main hope has been that people won't confuse America's most expensive school for one large group ther-

apy session. To those who wonder about the value of your degree: that's completely up to us as individuals and makers. The work already done will not be affected by honorary doctorates, the undergarments your friend wears to graduation, or the current state of traffic on Lake Shore Drive.

It's odd for us to be so vehement in our feelings on this particular honorary doctorate. Racism aside, it's actually refreshing. To see people up in arms, excited, and impassioned is unusual. Exhibiting these kinds of emotions has become less fashionable in the art world. If a gallery show opens and the artist makes "good" work, we go because it is the logical thing to do. There's no fanfare or shouting; one apathetically enters the gallery as if it were a public restroom with all the sacredness of Chartres Cathedral. We'll speed read a Semiotext(e) paperback while riding the Blue Line and gladly take a polystyrene cup of champagne later on. When was the last time we got angry? There are many things in our immediate surroundings to be upset about: the precarious employment situation of our school's security guards, the adjunct professor trend, and our police state, to name only a few.

In addition to congratulating Kanye West for the recognition of his talent, we ought to consider learning from him. His staunch criticism is unpalatable and revolutionary. His dedication to making should be something we appreciate, not condemn. While SAIC has a wealth of instructors and professors, we are also teachers and students of each other. Looking to our peers, even if from a distance, there's an opportunity to learn, question, and react. It's best to understand this responsibility now, because let's face it, the road is long.



Henry Harris is a student in Visual and Critical Studies and chronic Blue Line napper.

We too easily make an ostensibly moral criticism about Kanye that is really grounded in a kind of white discomfort about race, or as Robin DiAngelo calls it, "white fragility."

Art Students Do the Darndest Things

Campus Security's Best Stories



“Someone requested to have a project in the Master of Fine Arts exhibition in which a python would be released into a cage to eat a small goat.”

► Troy Douglas Pieper

At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), as at any school (or perhaps any organization), pranks are occasionally pulled, jokes are played, and sometimes just plain stupid acts are perpetrated. Setting aside a day for the playing of harmless tricks on one another is a tradition shared by nearly every culture (in the case of the U.S., the day is, of course, April Fool's Day). In honor of that day, we asked friends in the Campus Security office of one of the country's most prominent art schools for some of their favorite stories about SAIC students.

Arthur Jackson, in his more than three decades at SAIC as Director of Campus Security, has born witness to, and put out the fires of, many an incident at the school. Among the most famous is 1989's *What is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag?*, an installation by student artist Dread Scott that drew national attention by inviting viewers to stand on an American flag. President George H. W. Bush declared the piece “disgraceful.” In 1988, student David Nelson painted *Mirth & Girth*, depicting the recently deceased Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor, wearing only women's underwear. While on display at SAIC, the painting was torn down by city aldermen, and Nelson later received a settlement.

Much has happened since then, and Jackson, as well as David Martino, Executive Director at Campus Security, and Christene Lyons, Campus Security's Events Manager, has seen a lot. The three offered a bevy of more contemporary instances in which SAIC students gave them a surprise. “There were somewhere between 50 and 80 small dead birds on the sidewalk outside of the Chicago Theater” one year in the early oughts, says Jackson. It was the school's annual commencement ceremony, and the student's act of performance art was disrupting foot traffic on State Street outside the theater's main entrance.

During the school's commencement ceremony sometime in the late '90s, when Tony Jones was SAIC's president, a student made his way across the stage to shake the president's hand but instead removed his shirt and, bare-chested, “did an interpretive dance” for the president, says Jackson. “We didn't expect that.

Now we do expect it, and we have extra security near the stage.” Only a handful of situations with true potential for danger have arisen, agreed Martino and Jackson. Martino recalls in the last few years confiscating a “full-sized” sword and a fake gun.

Jackson would not say whether a student has ever had a gun on campus, only that students may come from other states where gun ownership laws may be different than those in Illinois. Martino also recalls a piece of student work that used spent shotgun shells to form the shape of a gun, which caught Campus Security's attention. In all of his years, Jackson notes, only one student has been able to sneak into the penthouse (used now to store equipment) on the thirteenth floor of the school's building at 112 North Michigan Avenue.

There are also instances each year in which students, curiously, are found outside dormitories or campus buildings barefoot “on wrong occasions,” Jackson tells us, i.e., in below freezing temperatures. Lyons reports that students every year attempt to scale the temporary fence near the school's building on Columbus Drive erected by Lollapalooza, an annual music festival, to get into the festival without paying admission, which is more than \$100 for just one day.

With some regularity, which Jackson calls a “recurring theme,” students over the years have staged performances on the steps of the Art Institute of Chicago. A 2012 instance Martino mentions is one in which a student pretended to spraypaint the museum steps until he was asked to stop.

Martino notes the trends one might expect at a university campus. Campus Security sees more incidents in the dorms and in students' on-campus studios and with younger students, he says, as well as when the weather warms. Students are sometimes found to have alcohol in their studios or to be sleeping in them. Someone once put a mattress in a tree outside the school's building on Columbus Drive. A student last year shined a laser pointer onto people from his sixth floor dorm room, causing passers-by to fear that a gun was being trained on them.

Last year, a student self-published a guide on how to “survive” in SAIC's McLean building. Describing the essen-

tials to effectively living full-time in the building, the manual also mentions that “most [campus security employees] are nice people.” Naturally, Campus Security was interested when an employee found a copy on the floor in a hallway. Visit fnewsmagazine.com to view a pdf of the manual.

What is often of far greater interest is the projects that never come to pass. “We've had requests for some strange things,” Martino reveals. “One student wanted to bring a llama to the Bachelor of Fine Arts exhibition SAIC hosts each year. Someone requested to have a project in the Master of Fine Arts exhibition in which a python would be released into a cage to eat a small goat.” A Master of Fine Arts student asked to clear with Campus Security his project to build a casket, suspend it by chains from the ceiling of the on-campus gallery, and live inside of it for 24 hours.

Students are Campus Security's priority, naturally, but they are not the only people to appear on security employees' radar. Lyons points out the St. Patrick's Day Parade and the parades that take place whenever the Chicago Blackhawks win the Stanley Cup as trying times for security employees who are working those days. Martino relates the story of a piece of student artwork that was stolen from a student's studio during Open Studio Night, an event in which people from the SAIC community as well as the public are invited to visit SAIC students' studios. The piece was later recovered from a thief who was not affiliated with the school.

In 2013, a group rented the ballroom in SAIC's 112 North Michigan Avenue building for a Northwestern University Asian and Asian American Alumni event. “They became intoxicated and unruly, throwing things from the balcony,” Martino says.

But Martino gives credit to SAIC students. When Campus Security gets involved with SAIC students who are in the midst of their more ill-considered moments, Martino remarks, “most students are able to be reasoned with.”



Troy Pieper is an M.A. candidate in Arts Journalism.

No Guns for Minority Men?

Former New York Mayor
Has Unconstitutional
Goals in Sight



“
**Cities need to
get guns out
of hands of
people who are
male, minority,
and between
the ages of 15
and 25.**

— Former Mayor Bloomberg

”

► Taina Vasquez

Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg has come under fire in response to his suggestion that young minority men should not be allowed to possess firearms in New York City.

During a speech Bloomberg gave at the Aspen Institute on February 5, moderator Jennifer Bradley asked him what the government could do for kids “who have been failed.” Despite indicating that access to education remains a problem, Bloomberg chose to focus on minority gun ownership instead.

Bloomberg’s response was that “Cities need to get guns out of [the] ... hands” of people who are “male, minority, and between the ages of 15 and 25,” a proposition he based on his own contrived statistic that 95 percent of murders in the United States involved a minority male between the ages of 15 and 25.

According to the Daily Caller’s audio recording of Bloomberg’s comments, he said, “You can just take the description, Xerox it, and pass it out to all of the cops. They are male, minorities, 15 to 25. That’s true in New York, it’s true in virtually every city in America.”

Bloomberg, a major funder of the gun-control advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety, suggested legislation to keep guns out of the hands of young minority men—but not their white counterparts.

“One of the unintended consequences is people say, ‘Oh my God, you are arresting kids for marijuana. They’re all minorities,’” Bloomberg said. “Yes, that’s

true. Why? Because we put all the cops in the minority neighborhoods. Yes, that’s true. Why do you do it? Because that’s where all the crime is.”

The bipartisan reaction included former Secretary of State for New York Randy A. Daniels, a Republican who worked in Albany during George Pataki’s term as governor of New York. He said, “Those statements are discriminatory and unconstitutional. You can’t restrict guns, or anything really, on the basis of race. It also doesn’t really address the problem.” This was not the first time Bloomberg’s stances have been called unconstitutional.

In Bloomberg’s 12 years as mayor of the most unequal city in the U.S. by income, he was a zealous advocate for the New York Police Department’s (NYPD) stop-and-frisk program.

Daniels is not the only New York politician to respond, however. “I expect nothing less from a mayor whose stop-and-frisk policy is now the subject of a federal monitor,” said a senior official of the New York State government who wished to remain nameless. “The statistics are staggering. Sadly, he believes the ends justify the means. [To him] the systemic violation of this community’s 4th amendment rights is an acceptable price to pay for crime reduction. A price no other community is required to pay or tolerate.”

Following a more than two-month non-jury trial, Federal Judge Shira Scheindlin deemed the practice a systematically racist and unconstitutional policing strategy in August of 2014, adding that the plaintiffs who had instigated the

case “readily established that the NYPD implements its policies regarding stop-and-frisk in a manner that intentionally discriminates based on race. (Chicago police use their stop-and-frisk program more than four times as often, according to a recent American Civil Liberties Union report.)”

The Aspen Times reported that Bloomberg successfully blocked video footage from his talk at the Aspen Institute from being posted online. As of Thursday, February 13, both the Aspen Institute and GrassRoots TV, the broadcast media organization that filmed Bloomberg’s speech, confirmed that they had agreed to withhold the footage from both online and television.

Daniels acknowledged Bloomberg’s motive behind the censorship. He said, “It’s understandable that people would have second thoughts about a position that is so clearly illegal.”

The senior government official echoed Daniels sentiment about Bloomberg, saying, “He makes claims that are factually incorrect and assumptions that have no correlation with reality and provides no rational legal basis for the discriminatory policy that he believes should be implemented upon a protected class of ‘citizens of color’.”

○

Taina Vasquez, a New York City native of Puerto Rican descent, focuses on fiber arts and journalism. She is committed to social justice and speaking truth to power.

museum mixtape

Building a soundtrack for your
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Marking Transitions with Auguste Renoir and Patti Smith

► Sammi Skolmoski

Auguste Renoir's *Chrysanthemums* depicts a wild bundle of blossoms wrangled into a vase at the center of a small table. There are two families of chrysanthemums — the nesting poms of white and the opened explosions of yellow-orange — extremely rich in color and painted so fluidly that some of the petals appear transparent. Many people can produce realistic botanical paintings, but a master will infuse them with vibrant personality.

Renoir painted *Chrysanthemums* in 1881-'82 just after his famous *Two Sisters (On the Terrace)*, during an experimental shift in his practice as he traded the loose, light motion of Impressionism for bolder saturation and tighter composition, and sensual nudes for the more saleable subject matter of portraits and floral still lifes. *Chrysanthemums*, then, requires musical accompaniment that is equally fluid, bold, and representative of an artist's transition. Patti Smith's *Fire of Unknown Origin* is a fitting complement.

According to *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism* in the Art Institute of Chicago, Renoir's "wet-on-wet" technique for painting *Chrysanthemums* began with a palette knife. He laid a thick, smooth layer of white lead paint to mask the weave of the canvas, followed by thin, intricate layers of wash to achieve effects akin to watercolor.

Fire of Unknown Origin from *Wave*, is the Patti Smith Group's most conventional — and possibly least-liked by fans — album and is the last before her nine-year hiatus from recording. The bellowing and mournful ballad seems representational of Smith's transition from punk headmistress to wife and mother. *Fire* is known as a transitory substance in many cultures, marking the passage from one state of matter to the next, symbolic either of life trajectories or of the other worlds of death. A Reiki burning bowl ceremony is perhaps the example of this symbolism, wherein a participant writes on a piece of paper first what she would like to let go of in life, then what she wishes to manifest, and then burns the paper so that the smoke may reach the masters of the universe and fulfill her intentions.

Just as Smith adapted a mellower sound before her departure from music, Renoir's shift to painting flowers was rooted in calmness. Renoir has said that his tonal studies of flowers allowed his brain to rest, as the tension inherently present with a live model became absent.

The painter's intricate study of values is most impressive in *Chrysanthemums*' shadows. Flowers with high petal

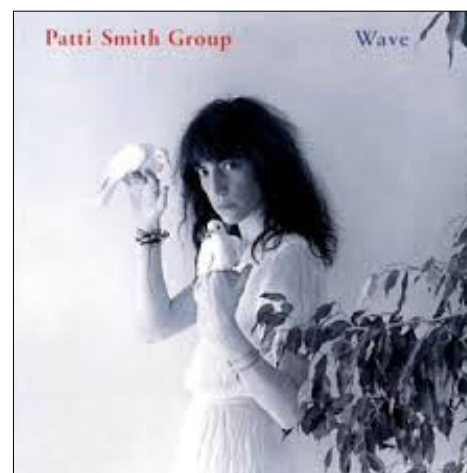


counts can often seem flat on a canvas, but Renoir's use of color, rather than black, to denote shadow gives an almost three-dimensional effect to the tightly bound masses. Rich blues and greens give the nucleus of the arrangement both impenetrable depth and reflective lushness.

Smith's vocals in *Origin* are similarly loose and enveloping. It is extremely difficult to understand the lyrics, as she conveys their meaning more tonally and emotionally, rather than through concrete annunciation. It's as if she uses her voice to carve out the negative space around each syllable instead of pronouncing the word itself, like Renoir's shadowy petal treatment. The sound is overwhelmingly full as a result.

The lyrics, beautifully demonstrative of Smith's poetic prowess, spin a tale of a baby lost in a fire with the heavy personification of death as a tormenting presence in the mother's life until Death, too leaves, and she is truly alone.

Renoir's orange blooms invoke small surges of flames, but the chrysanthemum, in many cultures, is also symbolic of death. In Renoir's France, it is historically almost exclusively used in services of the dead or is laid on graves. The U.S. is the only country where the chrysanthemum is a symbol of hope and optimism. When widening the interpretive aperture of the chrysanthemum loads with the same dichotomy of fire, marking the end of one phase and instilling hope



for the next.

The chrysanthemum also happens to be the official flower of Chicago, a sister city of Paris. It is where Smith was born, where fire is historically pertinent, and where *Chrysanthemums* is housed — leading one to the realization that in the midst of constant transition it's important to pause and appreciate these points of interception, to stop and smell the *Chrysanthemums*.

○

Sammi Skolmoski is an MFA candidate in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Creative Writing Department and a music junkie. Listen to her show *Gross Air with Terry Fresh* on FreeRadioSAIC.

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Deciphering 1920s Tokyo

SAIC students re-enact Mavo's *Dance of Death*

► Alison Reilly

Dance of Death, a 1924 photograph taken in Tokyo by an unknown photographer has been on Kara Jefts' (MA 2015) mind for quite some time. The image is the subject of her Art History master's thesis, and recently she has been thinking about how to bring the photograph to life. On March 14, Jefts collaborated with Dave J. Bermingham (MDes 2016), Leonard Suryajaya (MFA 2015), and Toni Zhao (BFA 2016) to host a re-enactment of *Dance of Death* at Ballroom Projects in Bridgeport. As they arrived, guests snacked on tasty onigiri, gyoza and udon and then listened to Jefts situate the photograph in 1920s Tokyo. Finally, they were invited to dress up as one of the seven performers in the image and have their photograph taken.

In the original photograph, seven men from the Japanese artist group Mavo perform "in various states of undress." One man, wearing only a pair of tights and heels, balances on a swing while holding an umbrella, his eyes closed in concentration. Beneath his bottom, a smaller man smokes a drag of a cigarette with his back up against a wall. One leans in for a kiss, waiting patiently for his partner. An arm punctures through the pair, awkwardly interrupting their intimate gesture. Another man hovers above the threesome as the seventh performer crouches next to him, against a ladder with a hammer in his hand.

Jefts chose to contextualize this image within a "post-disaster moment" in Tokyo. In 1923, an earthquake, followed by an outbreak of fires, completely devastated the city. As a result of this tragedy many Japanese officials called for moral reform, insisting that the disaster was punishment against devious behavior. But the Mavo group, who published a magazine under the same name, protested these conservative attitudes, choosing instead to subvert the norms of the time with sexually suggestive poses and radical hairstyles. The photograph appeared at the back of an issue of the magazine, which often included photographs of performances, and, at one point, even a firecracker, which resulted in censorship

of one issue.

The recent re-enactment at Ballroom Projects involved several moving parts. Jefts, "began by trying to find artists at SAIC whose work connected to identity, relationships to culture and gender, and who had an interest in play as a mode of social connection." She was familiar with Suryajaya's work and asked him to participate as the photographer of the re-enactment.

In early conversations with Jefts, Suryajaya told her: "I don't think we should recreate the photograph. I think what is really important is finding our own context of today but using the photograph as a guideline. For me I needed it to be clear that what I'm photographing was the process of photographing the re-enactment." Both Jefts and Suryajaya wanted participants to be inspired by Mavo's experimentation in the 1920s while forming their own interpretation of the image.

Their approach comes through strongly in the final product. In the original photograph the performers are tightly framed, but in the re-enactment, Suryajaya chose to include the chaos of the larger scene. Lighting fixtures are visible in the image, a hand in the foreground holds one stand firmly in place, and one additional performer takes a snapshot of the scene with a phone. The pink backdrop hangs lopsided against the exposed brick. Suryajaya captures the new performers for one moment, right as the scene appears to collapse into mayhem.

Suryajaya collaborated closely with Zhao to design the stage for the performers. Their main constraint at Ballroom Projects, an enormous former ballroom turned artist space currently run by Danny Floyd (MA 2013, MFA 2014), was a swing that needed to be installed on the largest beam for structural support. Once its placement near a wall had been decided, Suryajaya and Zhao started assembling the set. "It's like building a puzzle," Suryajaya stated. They slowly added movable walls, furniture, and props like a bicycle wheel and hula hoop to create a feeling of playful disorder.

On the night of the re-enactment, Zhao and Bermingham directed the performers as they prepared for the photo shoot. Groups of seven people were invited to select a costume, designed by Bermingham, try on a wig and apply makeup in the large mirror near the stage. While the energy leading up to this moment had been relatively reserved, the room finally broke loose as the photo shoot began. Bermingham used the poses in the original photograph to construct the costumes, and while the garments were loose fitting, they constricted movement in some way, so that the new performers had to manipulate their body parts in order to mimic the pose. The effect worked better for some costumes than others, but the awkwardness of the garments added a distinct playfulness to the evening as one novice performer had to explain to the next how to get into character.

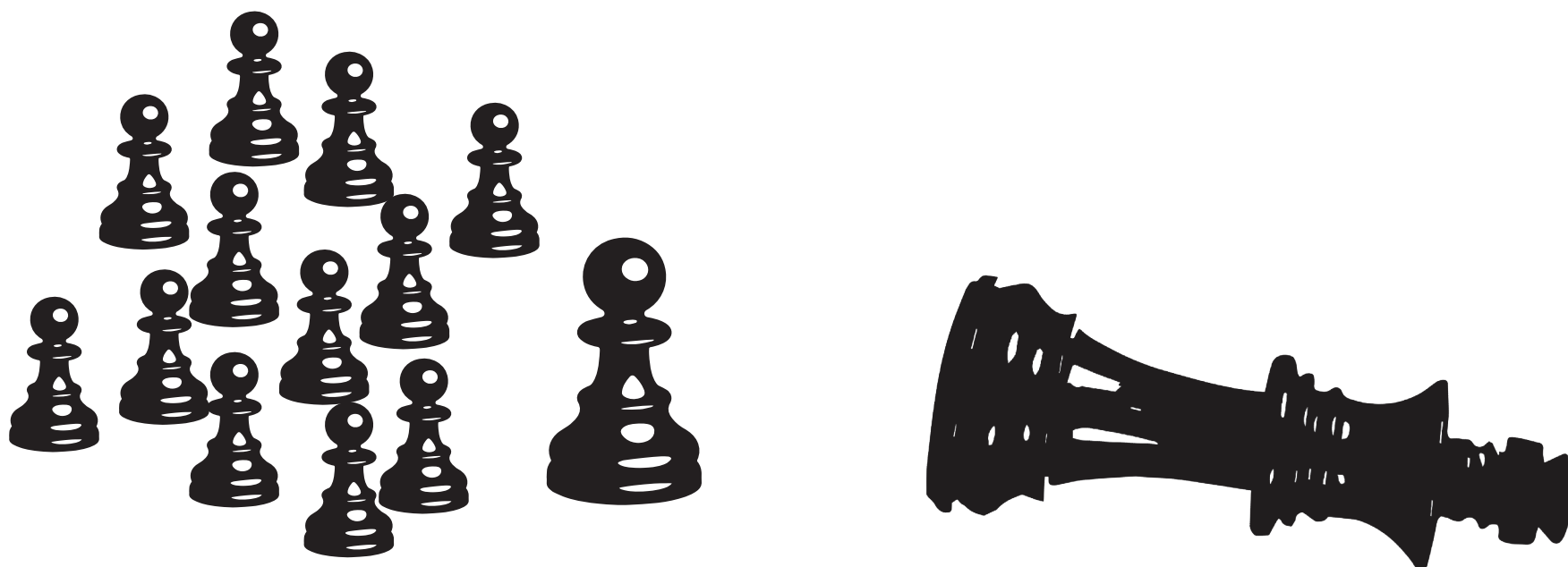
Jefts mentioned in her presentation that it would not be the last time that she would be attempting to re-enact the image. Hopefully, this proves to be true because there is incredible potential continuing to invite collaborators to interpret the image in different settings. Ballroom Projects was able to facilitate the large scale of the stage, but it also posed a problem, as the space is undeniably hard to fill. Even with more than fifty people in attendance, at times, the room felt unoccupied. Restaging the photograph in a smaller, more intimate setting might offer a new set of friendly encounters between strangers as they try to perform *Dance of Death*.

Alison Reilly is a graduate student in Art History. She is currently writing her master's thesis, which examines bunkerization in Albania through its representation in film.



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The Democratic Split

Who has a say in Chicago's historic mayoral election?

► Elizabeth Judd

During the mayoral election last February, 32.7 percent of registered Chicagoans who voted made a nationally significant decision that could change city politics. This change ultimately depends on the outcome of the runoff election set for April 7 (with in-person voting registration open until April 4).

In a political era overrun by super PACs and privatization, Jesus 'Chuy' Garcia — a grassroots campaigner whose family immigrated from the state of Durango, Mexico, to the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago — earned about 33 percent of the votes, enough for a runoff against the incumbent Rahm Emanuel.

According to the Chicago Tribune, Emanuel's ads (before the February election) would cover 6.5 days of television, if they were all played one after the other. While Garcia didn't purchase a single television ad until two weeks before the election, Emanuel spent an estimated \$7 million on television ads. With the help of a pro-Emanuel group spending a separate \$450,000 on smear campaigns against Garcia, Emmanuel gathered around 44 percent of the votes in the first round of voting.

The runoff came as a shock to Emanuel, who did not harvest the expected 50 percent of votes to avoid a runoff. A few days after being forced into the runoff, Emanuel — a politician who has a reputation for being argumentative and volatile — released an ad with an apologetic tone, "Sometimes I can rub the wrong way. Sometimes I talk when I should listen. I own that." Days after that ad aired, mental health activists told reporters that after repeatedly asking Emanuel what he was going to do about the lack of resources for citizens who struggle with mental illness, Emanuel repeatedly yelled "You're going to respect me!"

Emanuel closed 6 out of Chicago's 12 mental health clinics in 2012. He closed the clinics around the same time he announced the closing of 49 of Chicago's public schools on the South and West Side. As with the mental health clinics, these schools served neighborhoods in which residents are almost entirely black and Hispanic. In 2013, shortly after the school

closings, photos of the former Crispus Attucks Elementary school were released; the deteriorating building shows evidence of gang activity, according to the Chicago's Teachers Union.

Emanuel, who has been tag-lined 'Mayor 1 Percent,' has been criticized for his use of taxpayer money, especially TIF funds. Tax Increment Financing funds were brought into use nationally in the 1970's as an attempt to develop neighborhoods by creating a fund that limits the allocation of tax dollars within that district. As property values rise, the extra those property hikes provide flows into TIF funds controlled by the Mayor. Ideally, these funds are distributed to districts that are underdeveloped and face higher crime rates. The money is meant to be spent on businesses and public centers that will help foster a better community. However, in Emanuel's Chicago, higher percentages of these funds are going into the Loop and Chicago's North side. According to the Chicago Reader, more than half of the tax payer money going into the TIF funds would be going directly into public schools, if the funds were not in use. But, since the funds are in use, the people in power get to decide how to divide up the money. It wasn't until the summer of 2013 that Emanuel finally let the public see, via a virtual portal on the city's website, which areas received the funds. This was announced at the same time that the mayor fired 2,100 CPS employees. So, if Emanuel wants to spend \$55 million on building a new basketball arena for DePaul, a private university on the Northside, and a new hotel, while he cuts public funding for schools, he can, because apparently there hasn't been anyone with the means to challenge him.

Emanuel raising \$20 million in election donations, compared to Garcia's \$2.6 million, highlights that Garcia was relatively unknown to voters outside of the Hispanic community. Garcia also received most of his funds from unions, especially the Chicago Teachers Union, and is supported by community members that he's met. Garcia is more accessible than Emanuel, the former investment banker and Chief of Staff for President Obama. Garcia has spent the past few months knocking on doors and asking community mem-

bers what they feel they need from their government, whereas Emanuel spends more of his time talking to his banking/CEO supporters.

Garcia is running on a campaign built around transparency; if he wins, he promises to hire a Freedom of Information Act officer, and has plans to reform the TIF funds so that they "actually spur economic development ... and job growth in blighted areas." Garcia also criticizes the Mayor for privatization of city services, in particular, closing public schools and opening charter schools managed by private companies. Privatization refers to the act of transferring public sectors (which converts public jobs to private ones by laying off public workers and hiring private companies to supply employees) to the private sector, run by corporations. Emanuel has been pushing schools to privatize. Virtually all schools opened in the past few years are charter schools. Charter schools are privately managed schools that use public funding, but can design themselves to select certain students based on their performance, like test scores or grades.

Garcia is dead set against the privatization of schools, and seeks to use the many abandoned buildings on the South and West Side as "community peace hubs."

Critics of Garcia argue that he fails to say exactly how he is going to balance the budget. It's impossible to deny that Emanuel has more experience handling large sums of money, but it's also impossible to deny that Garcia has more experience as a community activist in the city of Chicago.

The current runoff may be local, but it is also symbolic of a national question: is the '1 Percent' going to hold onto the majority of our nation's wealth and power, or are independent thinkers, operating on small donations, going to take back our governments?

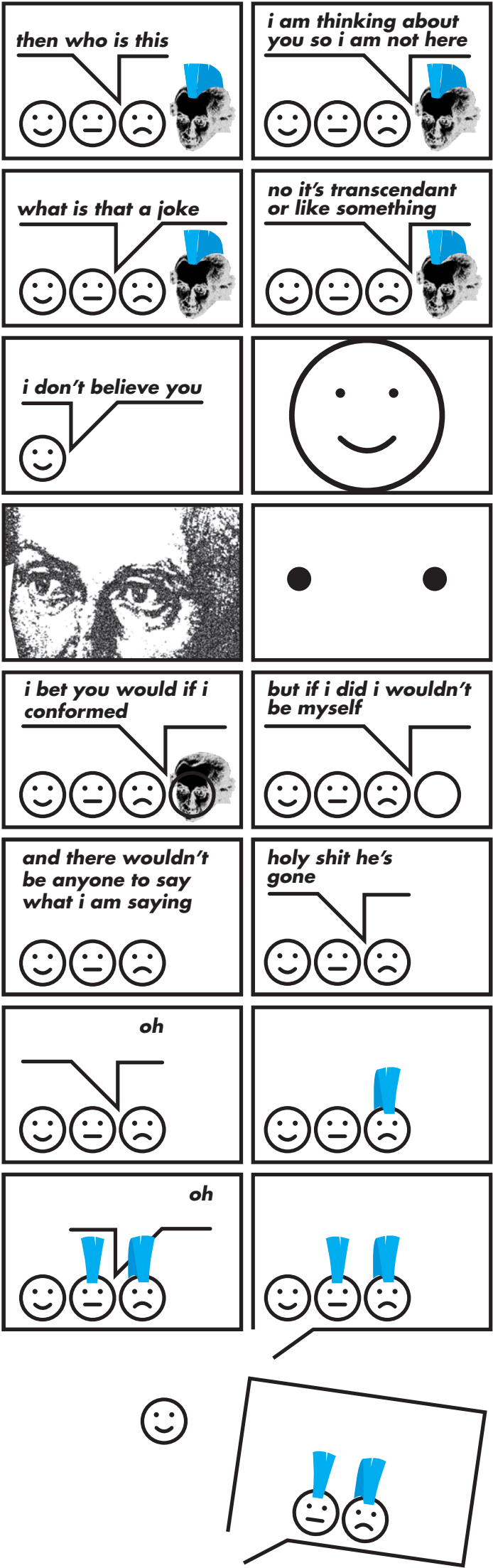


Elizabeth Judd is a first year student in the Art Education department. She spends most of her time eating cookies, reading, crying, and laughing.

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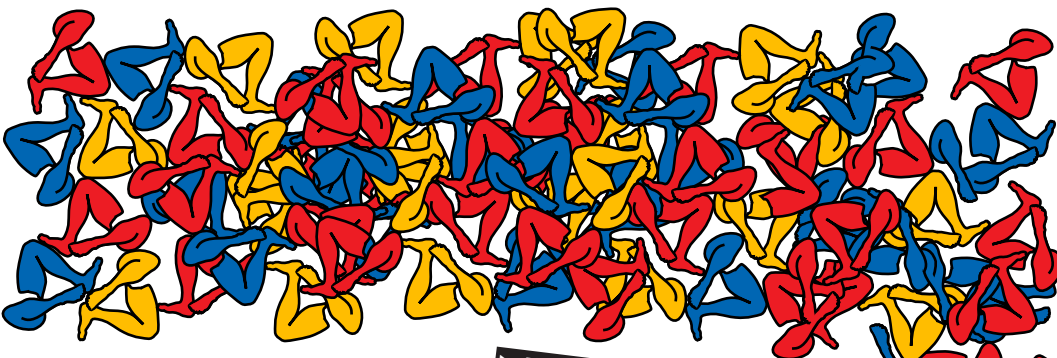
Berke Yazicioglu

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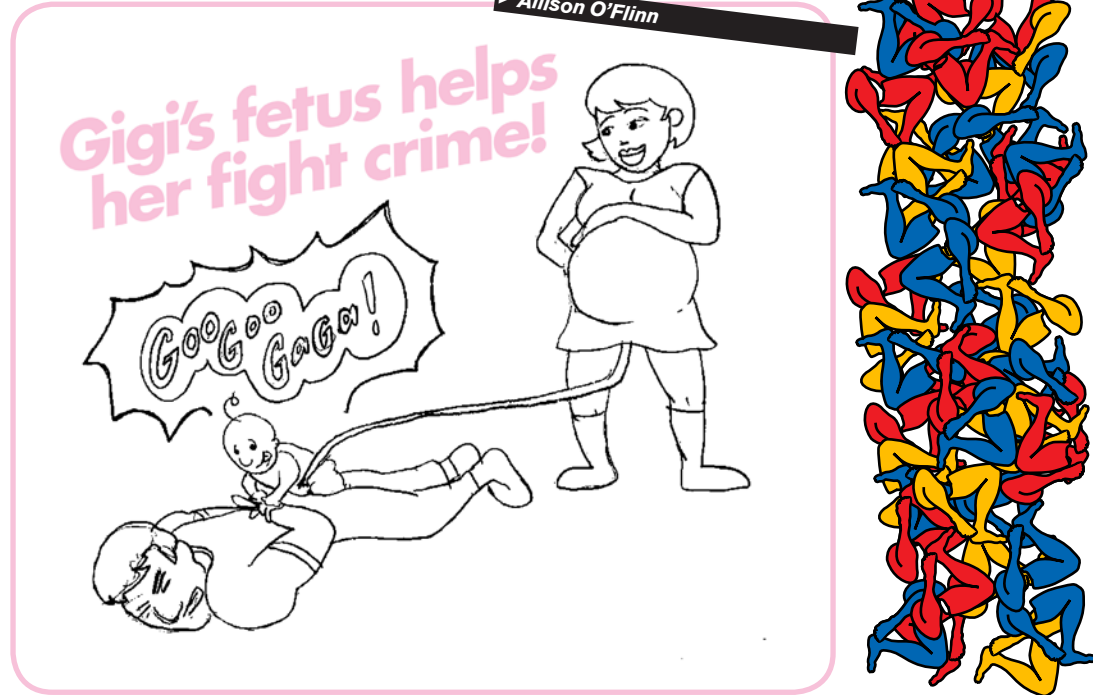


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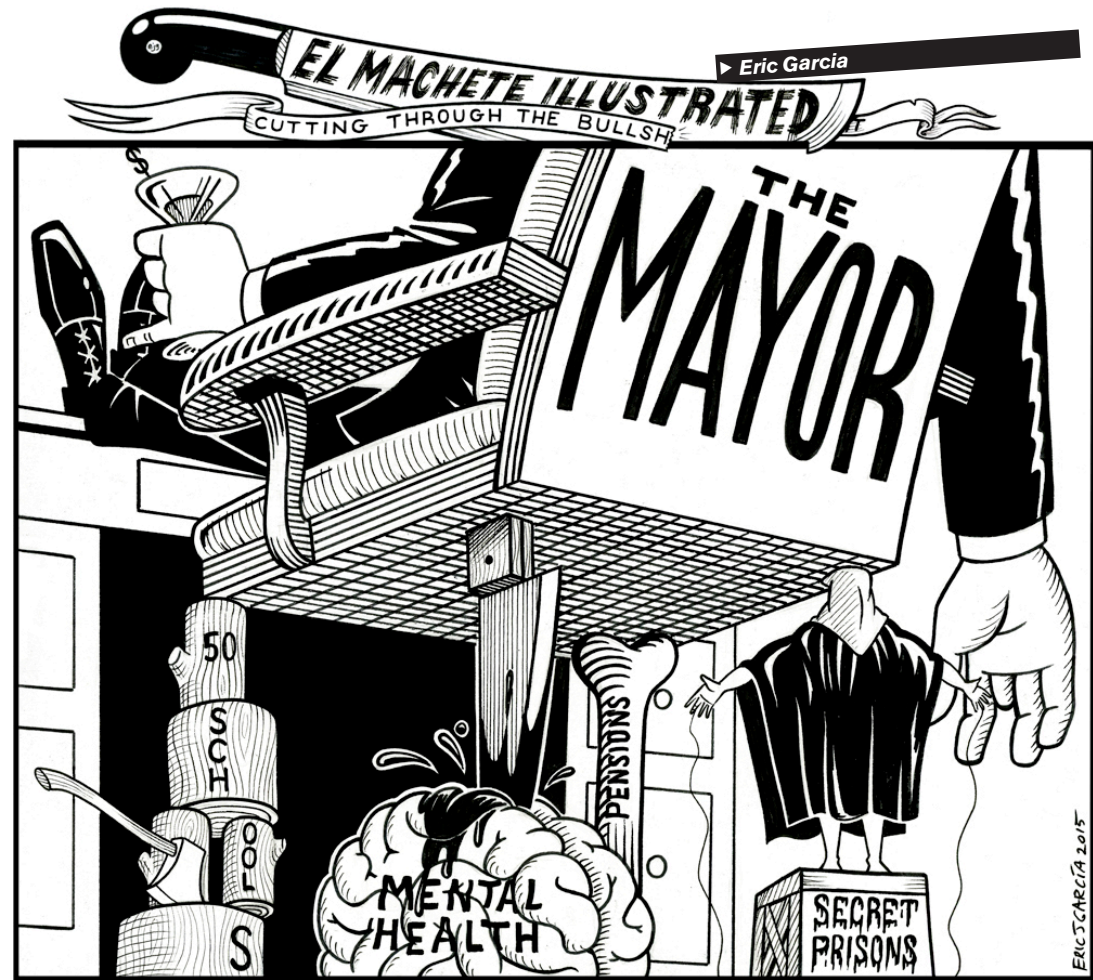
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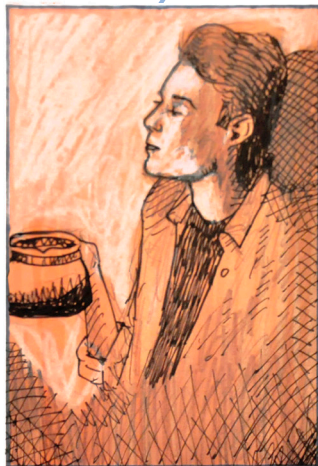
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